

MECHANIX ILLUSTRATED

THE HOW-TO-DO MAGAZINE

25c
APRIL



MI's Novel Hydrofoil Cruiser—Page 110



Special Boating Issue

Don Lorraine

WHAT'S KILLING OFF OUR MEN?

YOU CAN MAKE MONEY FROM WASTE

LET'S USE HELICOPTER CAVALRY



A.M. to P.M.
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ILLUSTRATED

691

Tom feels more weight at rear end of Hawk would improve handling, prevent wheel spin.

"This car should be a bomb" is what Tom says of this plush job.

By Tom McCahill

THE Golden Hawk is a far cry from my old second-hand 1921 Light Six Studebaker which could do 0-60 mph in exactly five and a half minutes. This all-new, foreign-looking product of the Studebaker-Packard Corporation is being offered as the prestige car of the Studebaker line. For a power plant, the tremendous V8 Packard engine displacing 352 cubic inches and developing 275 horsepower was tossed between the frames. This, plus the comparatively low weight of 3,800 pounds, should make the Golden Kid just about the Bomb of the Century.

Since this car is a performance entry, let's consider its chances in that field before we get into the practical side. Unfortunately, the Golden Hawk delivered to me for testing had less than 50 miles on the speedometer and was loaded like a sailor on his first night in port—with power seats, power windows, power steering and Packard's UltraMatic transmission. So evaluating its real performance potential presented a problem.

Packard engines are put together with extremely close tolerances at such vital points as the main bearings. This means careful break-in to avoid expansion damage. Unlike most other American cars with comparatively loose tolerances, these close-fitting parts will limit performance for a longer period of time.

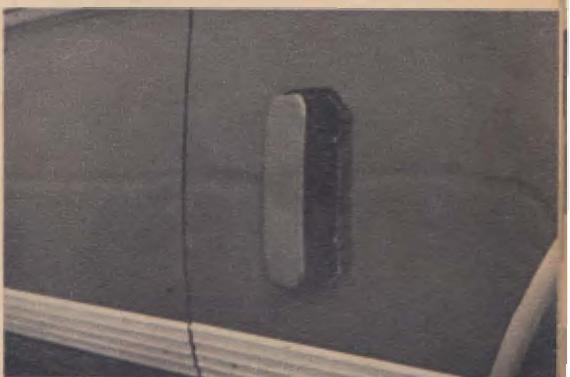
After several hundred miles the engine in my test car was still extremely stiff and I only succeeded in making respectable test runs in the early morning while the engine was still on the very cool side. As this car has been one of the most widely-rumored "sleepers" of the

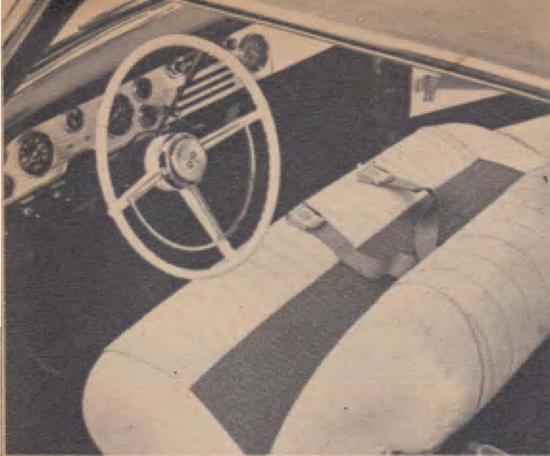
Air scoops are on rear fenders; front fenders mount the small parking lights.



Singled out for McCahill praise is low-sloping hood allowing good view of road.

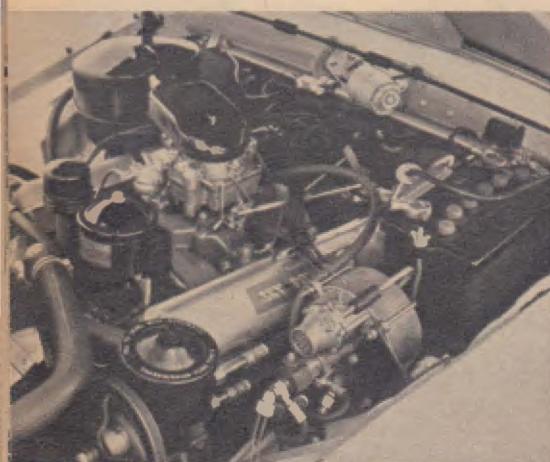
Front fender vents mark return of useful feature most American cars have discarded.





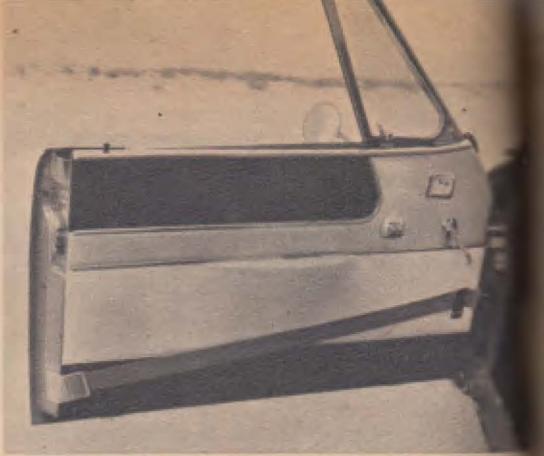
Tom calls the instrument panel the finest one he has ever seen on an American car.

Golden Hawk sports tremendous V8 Packard engine which delivers big 275 horsepower.



'56 batch, speculations as to its performance against cars such as the Chrysler 300B have run rampant. The one they sent me to test was definitely neither equipped nor prepared to show the Hawk off at its best. So I can only speculate as to how fast a well-tuned, high-performance Hawk might go. But several well-prepared Hawks without the extra weight of the power equipment are entered in the Daytona Beach Speed Trials and we'll bring you up to date on the Hawk's ultimate performance next month.

Meanwhile, let's consider the Hawk I tested, which as already stated had more equipment inside its closed doors than



Seat belts are unique in that the outside part of the belt fastens to the car door.

Jim McMichael, automobilia's foremost trunk-tester, says that luggage space is ample.



Abercrombie & Fitch. Zero to 30 mph averaged 3.4 seconds and this, on the face of it, does not tell the full story. Due to the tremendous torque of the engine (380 foot-pounds @ 2800 rpm) and due to the fact that the Hawk is quite a nose-heavy car (because of its heavy engine), it is almost impossible to make a fast getaway start on any surface without considerable wheel-spinning. I feel that if I'd shoved two or three hundred pounds of sand in the trunk to equalize the weight distribution, my times would all have been considerably better. Zero to 60 averaged out at 9.6 seconds and 0-70 at 12.2. This is fast, as anyone knows, but really not too sensational or



Inside, claims Tom, the Hawk will match the lushness of any Detroit car ever built.

Semi-curved windshield gives all the visibility of any wraparound, gets Tom's nod.



outstanding when compared with the competition the Hawk must run against.

Top speed presented more problems. This is a car that doesn't really unwind, due to its cam design, until it's above 80 mph. Then it really starts to take hold. Because of my deadline for this issue, I couldn't wait for a smooth beach, which sometimes means a delay of weeks. The measured mile at Daytona Beach where I made my tests had more dips in it than a roulette wheel. On one run, when I [Continued on page 200]

Prestige car of the Studebaker line has brand-new look in grille, bumper design.



"Firm but comfortable suspension."

SPECIFICATIONS

MODEL TESTED:

Studebaker Golden Hawk

ENGINE:

V8 cylinder, OHV; bore 4.0 inches, stroke 3.5 inches; maximum torque 380 foot pounds @ 2,800 rpm; brake horsepower 275 @ 4600 rpm; compression ratio 9.5 to 1

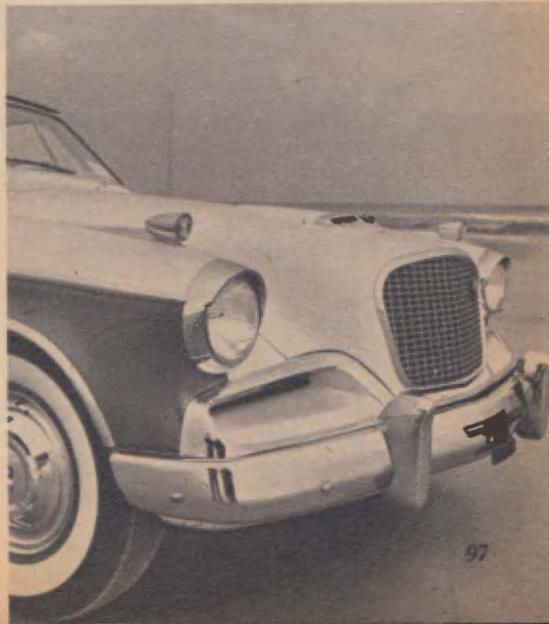
DIMENSIONS:

Wheelbase 120.5 inches; overall length 203.94 inches; tread 56.69 inches front, 55.69 rear; width 70.44 inches; height 56.31 inches; weight 3,800 pounds; standard tire size 7.10x15; gas tank 18 gals

PERFORMANCE:

0 to 30 mph, 3.4 seconds
0 to 50 mph, 7.4 seconds
0 to 60 mph, 9.6 seconds
0 to 70 mph, 12.2 seconds
Top speed, 130 mph

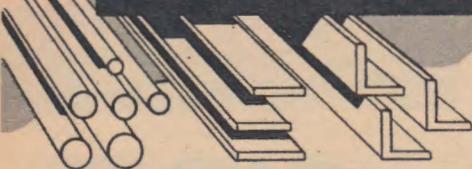
At 60 mph on speedometer, actual speed 57.9 mph



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The '56 Golden Hawk

[Continued from page 97]

got up to just above 120 mph, we were leaping as much as 15 or 20 feet through the air between sand mounds. (If you've ever sailed through the air like a kangaroo on fire at better than 120, touching the ground only occasionally, you will concede this is not the best formula for growing old.) Even if I hadn't been chicken I couldn't have made it go any faster.

What would this Hawk have done if the beach had been good? It is my sincere belief that it would have just topped 130 and stayed there as steady as the smile on Mona Lisa. After my beach runs I went over to Bob Osiecki's Racing Equipment Company. He was preparing a Golden Hawk for the Trials and after a lot of multiplying, squaring, cubing, dividing and consideration of gear ratios and tire size, we came to the conclusion that the stick job, unloaded, should run 135-plus on the beach, if conditions are right and the engine tuned to the teeth.

What this car definitely needs, in my opinion and in the opinion of some top race men such as Smokey Yunick, Marshall Teague and Bob Osiecki, is a real competition cam. Call it a "high performance" cam, "heavy duty" or whatever you choose, this car with a sharper cam might prove a real threat to the 300B Chryslers in the Speed Trials. As is, it's my guess that the Chryslers will take the Hawks with ease. In the MECHANIX ILLUSTRATED Trophy standing-start mile, even the hot Chevys should outrun them. If I'm wrong, there'll be no articles of mine in here next month—I'll be on a boat to Tasmania. But that's the way I see it.

Mauri Rose, three-time winner at Indianapolis, said when he sat in the car with me, "McCahill, look what you started." Rose is master-minding the Chevy team for Speed Week. He went on to remark that a few years ago we had nice, sloppy family cars without very good brakes or roadability and no performance. McCahill put in the pitch month after month for better brakes, more safety, better balance, roadability and all the rest—and today everyone's trying to build better road cars than the other guy. It's all your fault, said Mauri. "And don't try and argue

with me," he added, "I've got all my old MI's at home and I can prove you're the guy responsible."

Well, if we made them safety and roadability-conscious, we're glad. But the performance of some well-known makes is out-and-out race car stuff today. It's my belief that we build several stock sedans now that could have won the Indianapolis race just ten years ago—perhaps even this Hawk—and that's something to think about.

The Golden Hawk is a good-looking car and extremely pleasant to drive. Inside the cabin it'll match the lushness of any American car ever built. The instrument panel is the finest I've ever seen on an American car. In addition to all the regular instruments it has a real oil gauge and ammeter, plus a magnificent tachometer and a vacuum gauge. These are smartly-designed, easy-to-read instruments mounted in a machined metal panel. In this department the Golden Hawk makes some other current models look like fish peddlers' carts.

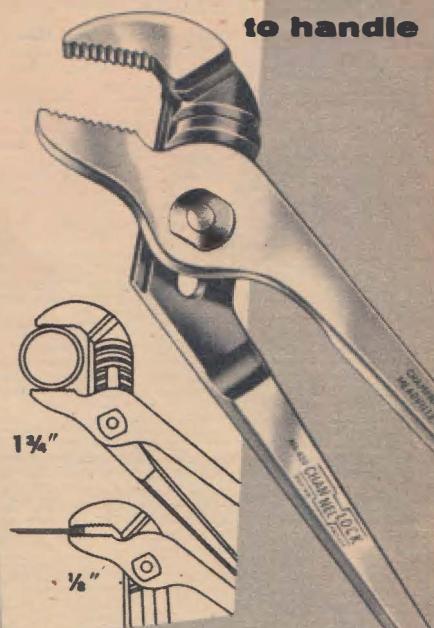
The seat belts in the Hawk I tested were unique in that the outside part of the belt fastened to the door, which would help hold the doors closed in the event of a crash but might prove uncomfortable if the crash was such that the door was ripped open. One outstanding feature of this car is the windshield. This is not a wraparound with built-in distortion but a finely-placed, semi-curved windshield which, due to its placement closer to the driver, gives all the visibility of any wrap-around. Another feature is the low-sloping hood which lets you see the roadway as close as four feet in front. The side mirror, almost opposite the driver's chestline, is the finest I've ever seen because, being right there, it gives you a much better rear view than most conventional center mirrors. When driving this car, the firm-but-comfortable suspension instills confidence. On the debit side, the emergency brake is located just right to de-knuckle you and I would be just as happy without the fender-mounted parking lights.

In summing up, the Golden Hawk is the car to watch in the '57 Speed Trials. Thanks to its low weight and terrific power, it would be just an afternoon's work to make

[Continued on page 202]

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