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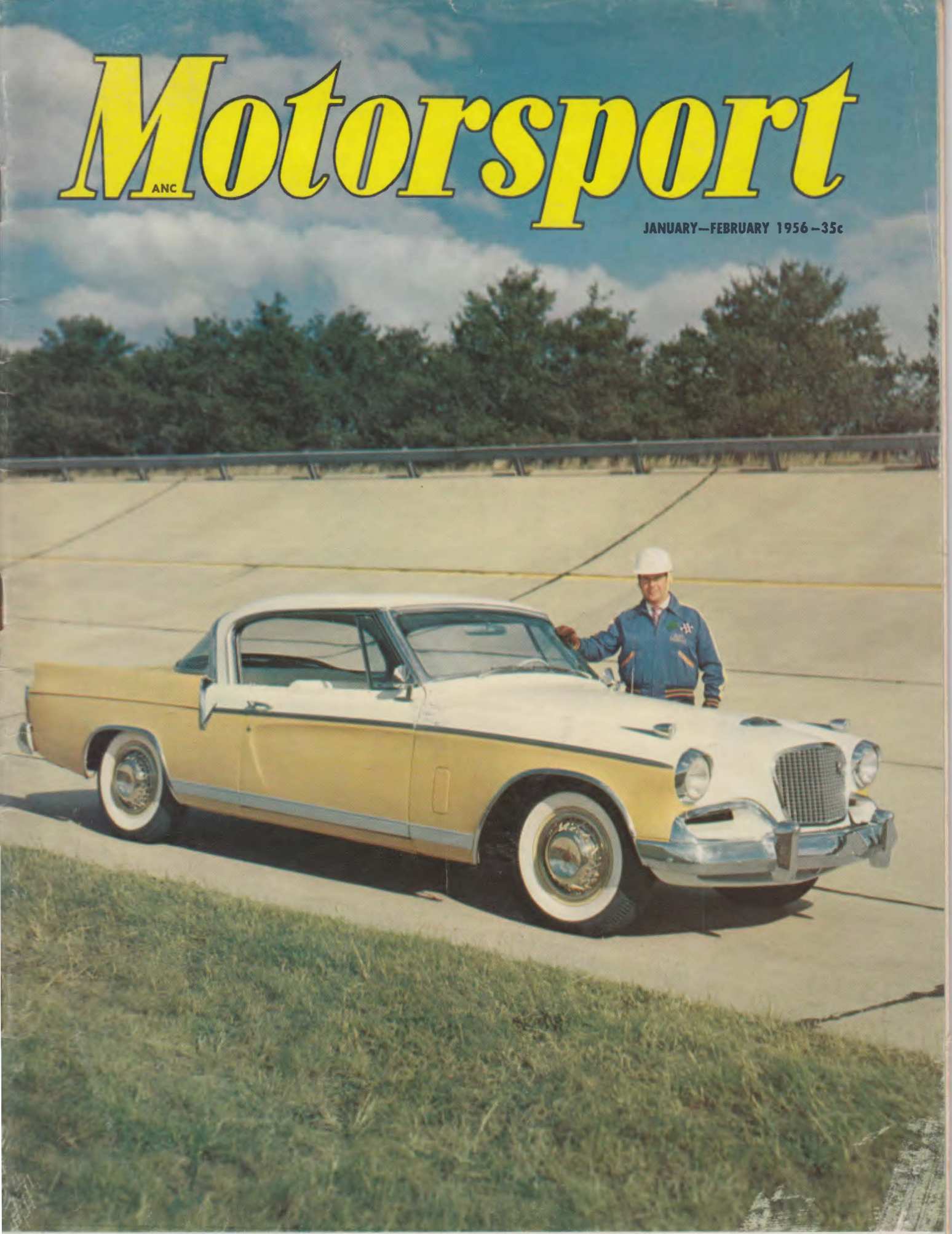


BILL HOLLAND TESTS THE GOLDEN HAWK • JANES COVERS SOUTHERN [illegible] AND [illegible]N

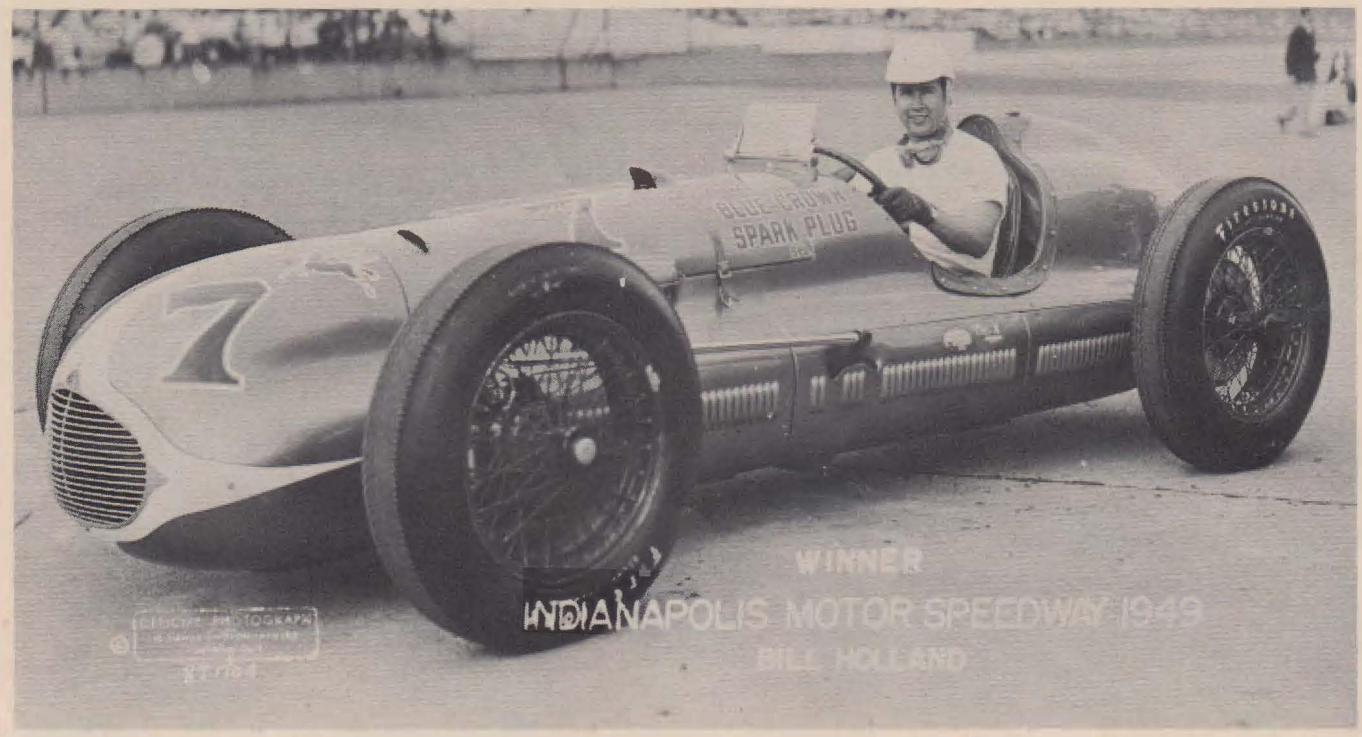
We are very happy to present herewith the first in a series of Road Test articles by Bill Holland, winner of the Indianapolis 500-Mile Classic in 1949, second place man in 1947, 1948 and 1950 and member of the Champion Sparkplug 100-Mile-an-Hour Club. Bill, who except for a mix up in pit signals at Indy would have been a two-time winner, has one of the finest records at the big brick oval and on sprint, midget and championship tracks throughout the country. His appraisal of 1956 American cars will be unbiased and authoritative and we are both proud and happy to welcome him aboard as chief test pilot for Motorsport.

Right: Holland shows Golden Hawk model to a pretty model. Model (car) is longer and lower than other models, somewhat like European cars.

Bill Holland Tests.....

NEW 275 HP 5-PASSENGER SPORTS TYPE HITS 0 TO 60 IN 9.4 SECONDS WITH A TOP READING AT 125 MPH.

By Bill Holland



You sports car lovers who didn't buy the 1955 Studebaker because they didn't have enough muscles, can now step right up and put your money on the line. You're going to love the Golden Hawk, it has GO to spare, it is now a speedster with SPEED. It will do 125 mph by the clock and 0-60 in 9.4 seconds with Ultramatic transmission, 3.07 gear ratio, hydraulic valve lifters, a smooth cam, power steering and brakes. Imagine what this little beauty would do with a good racing kit.

I drove the Golden Hawk last month during the press showing at the Packard Proving Grounds in Detroit. It was a miserable day, raining hard with about a 30 mph gusty crosswind, but in spite of these conditions I had no trouble doing 120 mph around the big two and one half mile banked concrete oval. Later in the day after it stopped raining, but with the track still wet I was clocked at 122 mph. The next day with the sun shining I averaged 123 mph and reached a top speed of 125 on the straights. It handled beautifully; even in the crosswind I experienced no diving at all.

This new Studebaker has everything an American sports type car should have, smart looks, performance, good handling, and most important for the American car buyer, comfort for four passengers at a reasonable price.

Some of the interesting features in this new car are, the big, short stroke V-8 engine, with 352 cubic inches, 9.5 to 1 compression, 275 hp, 380 ft. lbs. of torque at 2800 rpm, four barrel carburetor, 12 volt system with 30 amp. generator, and dual exhaust system.

The built in safety features are, new brakes with Safety-Fin drums, crash tested safety door latches, increased passing efficiency, new safety strength steel bodies using heavy gauge, box section, girder construction, new safety beam headlights, higher capacity defroster system, tubeless tires, selftightening wheel bolts, padded dash and padding on the rear of the front seat, a hill holder to prevent rolling back on hills.

The radial dial instruments on the dash are of functional design inspired by Grand Prix race cars; included are, 140 mph speedometer, tachometer, large

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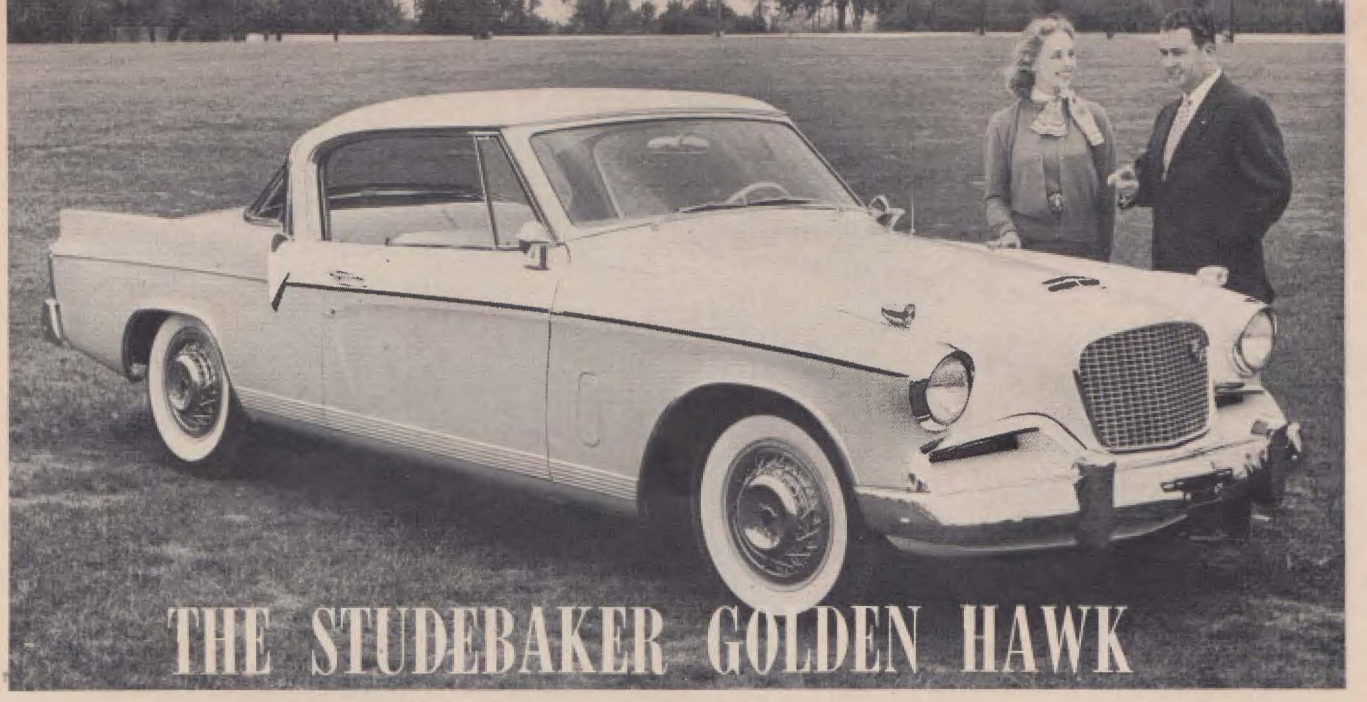
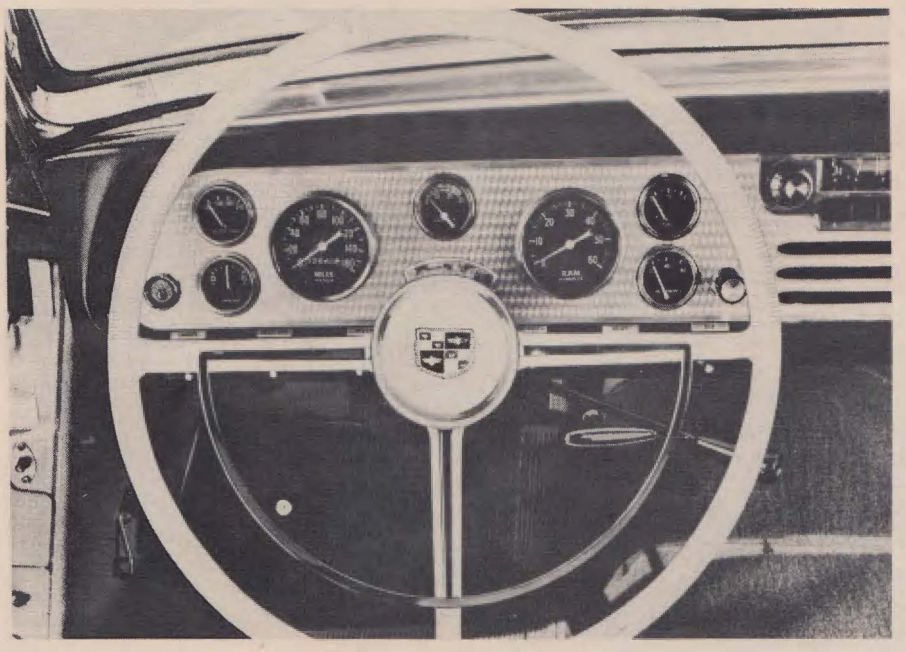
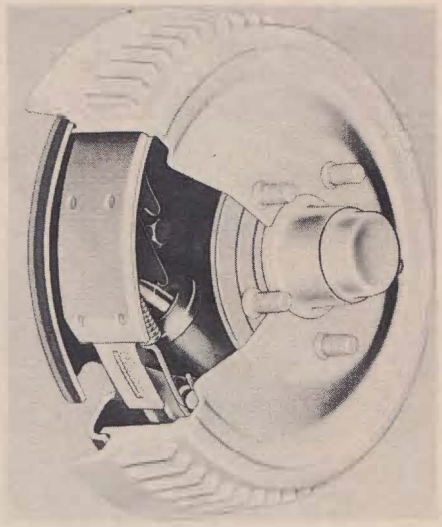




The instrument panel on the Golden Hawk incorporates a tachometer and vacuum gauge in addition to standard instruments. Panel is padded.

The Sky Hawk is one of two hardtop models in Studebaker's line of sporty cars. Sky Hawk has 287 cubic inch V-8 engine that develops 210 hp.



Finned brake drums on President and Golden Hawk were designed to prevent brake fade by increasing air circulation, heat radiation area.

Motor City Mirror

(*Continued from page* 13)

and getting it out more effectively have been given careful treatment.

Efforts to control this greater horsepower have been manifested in some brake redesigns and improvements, but this has seemed a rather sterile area. The fact is that brakes are fairly close to optimum levels of virtue in their present designs. At any rate, it is no secret that every development shop in the industry is working overtime trying to find some kind of improved braking system.

And, finally, the mechanical side has seen an all but unanimous movement to 12-volt electrical systems. The 6-volt wiring has practically passed on.

A few postscripts remain options, as reflected in 1956. To begin with, automatic transmissions are moving very close to standard equipment, and they operate more virtuously than ever before—smoother, faster, more efficiently. The new General Motors automatic transmission, third in that company's "stable," is worth mention.

Second, power steering is at last coming down in price to the level where it should be. The power steering mechanism has long been overpriced; the reductions of 1956 will do a little toward compensating for the general increases in list prices of the automobiles themselves. Then there's the matter of air-conditioning; it caught on better than was expected during 1955 and it is expected to be more widely ordered in 1956. (The new Continental started off with air conditioning as an option, but by the time this reaches print it may be installed as standard equipment, so widespread has been the call for it).

The big 1956 swing in styling has been toward the use of accentuated rear quarters. Fenders, taking a cue from the highly distinctive Cadillac fins of years past, have mostly tended in an upswept direction. This seems a generally accepted styling trend. Less decisive has been the front end treatment; the rounded hood motif of the Chrysler cars and the somewhat more straightened, more right-angled pattern of the General Motors designs are each finding adherents.

In between front and rear the industry has outdone itself for 1956 with imaginative handling of side panels. Speedlines, highlights and chrome moulding have been utilized in more ways than could be thought imaginable. The breakup of the side panels into various planes has been accentuated by the use of more color (and often more vivid color) than has been the case heretofore. One make, at least, has not only three-color combinations, but also a panel of gold intruded between them —making it a four-tone job!

Some grilles seem to be edging away from the massive bar treatment which gained vogue after the war, toward more refined honeycombs or similar treatment, a turn for which original credit must be given to Cadillac. Wheels are fancier than ever; the plain discs of past years have been dolled up by stamping with simulated ridges, rectangles, closely-meshed spokes and practically every other treatment you can think of.

Windows are larger all around—bigger windshields, more completely wrapped around rear lights. There seems some indication, too, that body lines are being lowered ever so slightly at the waist, and the height of the windows somewhat enlarged. The one exception to this trend is in the new Continental, where the rear quarters are blind, in deference to the tradition established with the Lincoln-Continental of the prewar and postwar periods.

Four-door hardtops are jumping out like corn pops over a hot fire. This seems to be the standard four-door car of the future, just as the two-door hardtop has largely replaced the traditional coupe.

A word, now, as to the factories that build these chromed creations. Enlargement is the order of the day throughout the industry. The Big Three have taken the lead in expanding manufacturing and assembly facilities; and the smaller producers are not far behind, in scale with their respective outlooks. The noteworthy aspect of this expansion is that it is largely in automated equipment—which means that precision of manufacture will be continually better.

Completion of the nine-figure building programs of the big companies—and most of it will be done in 1956—should result in the industry's capacity being enlarged to cope with today's higher plateau of production without an agonizing amount of overtime. Volume in 1955 ran close to 8,000,000 cars plus another 1,200,000 trucks or so. The output in 1956 will be close to those figures, from all reliable estimates; and it will be achieved with less overtime (which ultimately means less cost for the customers) and with more uniformity and greater precision.

Bill Holland Test

(*Continued from page* 16)

sweephand clock, and water temperature, oil pressure, ammeter, manifold vacuum, and fuel gauges.

The 1956 Golden Hawk presents a strikingly new appearance. The hood is higher and gives the sensation of power and length. There is an air scoop near the grille; reminds me of the Ferrari. The rear deck also is higher and more massive providing 20 per cent more storage space. The new fenders are fleet and long in appearance with fins at the rear. The wheels are spoked and neat looking with 7.10 - 15 tires.

Visibility is good both front and rear. There is an arm rest in the center of the rear seat. The car is longer, 204 inches overall, it weighs 3,325 lbs. and is only 4 feet 8 inches high. Rear overhang is 49 inches.

All the driving at Detroit was at high speeds and on high banked turns, so to get a better feel of the car under near normal road conditions, we took it to the Studebaker Proving Grounds, 10 miles west of South Bend, Indiana. The grounds here are beautiful and very well kept, the three-mile track is very much like any black top highway you might drive on, anywhere around the country. The turns are banked but only slightly. The outside lane is smooth, the inside lane is quite bumpy. Adjoining the track is a road that winds up thru the hills and woods, then back to the track again. This is called the durability course and is full of turns and bumps. Some of the turns are covered with small pebbles and sand, others have built in ripples and bumps. It was designed to give a severe test of a car's durability as well as handling characteristics.

The day I arrived to make the tests, it rained all day, but we decided to make the tests anyway, so keep in mind everything we did in this test was on a wet surface.

Eddie Reynolds who is in charge at the proving grounds, drove me around the course a few times to acquaint me with it. We were accompanied by Lyn Milliken of Studebaker Public Relations Dept.

The track was cleared of the regular tests cars and we were ready to start the test of the Golden Hawk, I was assisted in the tests by one of the factory's regular test drivers, Ernest Wiggins.

First we checked the speedometer for accuracy on the measured tenths marked on the backstretch. We found it to be only one mile an hour fast at 60 mph.

We then ran a series of acceleration tests with the following results,

0-30	mph —	3.5 seconds	
0-60	" —	9.4	"
30-60	" —	5.9	"
40-60	" —	4.0	"
60-100	" —	21.0	" (high gear)

These times are amazing, I think and they were done with a 3.07 gear in the rear and Ultramatic transmission. The top engine rpm was 5,000. This is also good for stock hydraulic valve lifters. I noticed at 80 mph in high gear the engine was only turning 3,000 rpm.

Most of the American sport car builders have increased the horsepower and top speed of their cars, but haven't increased the braking power to keep pace with it. Studebaker has taken care of this too with their new Safety-Fin brake drums, which increase the cooling area about 100 percent. I made two stops as quickly as possible on the wet surface, from 100 mph. I noticed no fade, nor any tendency to pull to either side.

We then did a few fairly fast laps around the three mile track going into the turns about 85 to 90, sliding a little but with good control and recovery at all times. The steering setup of five and one-half turns lock to lock is fast

enough for highway driving.

We left the track then and drove around the course in the hills for about an hour, trying just about everything possible on the wet surface. There were wet leaves on both sides of the road in most places too, so we couldn't slide around as much as I would have liked. However I found I could negotiate the turns marked 30 mph at 45 and the 40 mph turns at 50. There is some lean noticeable on the corners, but not excessive, due to the low suspension of the Golden Hawk. It rode over the big built in bumps very nicely too; the ride is not too soft, neither is it stiff enough to be uncomfortable on the highway. The new adjustable Gabriel shock absorber is available from the Studebaker factory. With this shock you can get the kind of ride you prefer, soft, medium or hard.

So we headed back to the garage convinced that this car is going to make a lot of new friends in 1956.

Road Testing Simca

(*Continued from page* 21)

Personally I'd have to see such an accomplishment to believe it, but according to a Simca owner, "to own a Simca is to love a Simca." A reputation for durability and dependability seems well founded for the writer did his best to induce rattles and other troubles in the test car without any bad results.

The "Aronde" Grand Large hardtop provides room for five average size persons. The styling is in the best continental tradition, and those who prefer the absence of a door post between the side windows and the rear-quarter windows should approve. All windows roll down mechanically, and on this score I found my first beef: eight full turns are required to roll down the side windows, making raising or lowering far too slow a process. During my tests down near the water front the Simca got thoroughly doused with spray several times, necessitating the use of the windshield wipers. Ordinarily one has excellent visibility forward, all around in fact, but in rainy weather, the driver will be hampered by a 5-inch wide blind spot at the left side of the windshield.

Continuing with the comparatively few technical objections I found on the Simca, I feel that it is a distinct disadvantage to be able to lock the doors externally only from the right side. The door handles, too, do not measure up to the high standard of workmanship noted on the rest of the car, file marks being visible, indicating a possible hasty final assembly and inspection. The handles, however, are aluminum as are most of the interior fittings, parking brake handle, etc. The trim on the steering wheel is of plastic and in appearance, at least, this trim seems none too sturdy. The small aluminum panel fastened to the bottom center of the dash carries several auxiliary controls —the ignition switch which is pushed in for on, pulled out for off (the key locks the transmission only); the choke control; a pull starter, etc.

The instruments are well grouped and with the exception of a water temperature gauge, which is missing, are adequate. A red light warns of the approaching emptiness of the tank when the 2-gallon level is reached. Red lights are also used in place of the more useful instruments to warn of low oil pressure and generator discharge. It seems that there has been some effort to make the Simca somewhat more palatable for the average American driver, but enthusiasts would probably prefer instruments that tell the whole story.

On the credit side, as opposed to these foregoing objections, I believe that the Simca can become an import marque of considerable importance if a vigorous sales program is undertaken. Thoroughly pleasing to drive, the little car is very capable in any traffic situation. Excellent maneuverability, a very short turning radius, ability to start off smoothly on the level in 2nd gear and to cruise nicely in the 30-MPH range in 4th gear, or to handle almost any situation in 3rd gear, makes this an excellent car for around town where parking problems and heavy traffic make a small car definitely the peer of the big stuff. On the open road the Simca can be safely cruised at 60 MPH all day long, and if you've a mind to take to the side roads, ability to corner and keep a sure footing on gravel and secondary roads will please the fellow who drives for the fun of it. The ride is remarkably soft for a car with a moderately firm suspension by means of coil springs up front and semi-elliptics aft. Telescoping double action shock absorbers effectively iron out bumps, while providing better than average stability in hard going. The car did bottom, but it took effort.

Under the nood one finds the usual compact layout of the small imports—a tiny overhead valve engine that is readily serviceable. The three bearing crankshaft is both dynamically and statically balanced. A conventional thermostat controls cooling system circulation and the spark is automatically advanced. The oil sump is so designed as to achieve considerable cooling from the air stream. Lucas ignition components are fitted and the carburetor is a Solex unit. The use of the more widespread British parts should relieve some of the servicing problems.

In view of the similarly sized and competitively priced imported cars, mostly of British origin, the Simca Hardtop (and the 4-door Sedan for that matter) stacks up as an exceedingly attractive package with quality, comfort and that all important factor—performance. Economical to operate, the Grand Large turned in nearly 26 miles per gallon over a hard driving weekend. Part of the kick of the imported car field is the wide variety available, and the new Simcas certainly should increase interest. In my opinion, this car has a lot to offer.