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MARCH 1956

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BILL HOLLAND
REPORTS ON
STUDEBAKER'S
GOLDEN HAWK



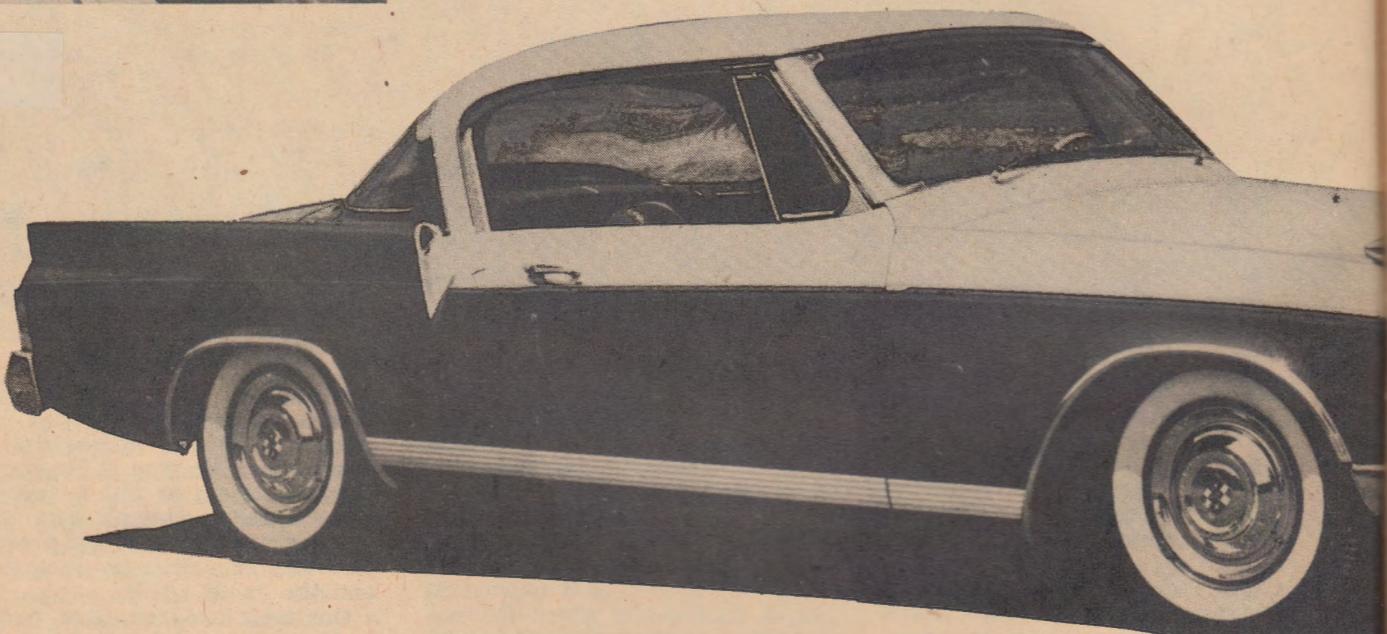
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Bill France Forecasts:

THE YEAR AHEAD FOR STOCK CARS



Bill Holland



Studebaker Golden Hawk Specifications

Engine

Type: 90 V8
Valve Arrangement: In-head
Bore and stroke: 4 x 3½"
Displacement (cu in): 352
Cam ground (three-quarter)
Compression Ratio: 9.5-1
Taxable horsepower: 51.2
Advertised max brake horsepower
at Engine Rpm: .275 @ 4600
Max torque (Ft lb @ rpm):
380 @ 2800
Carburetor: 4-barrel, downdraft
Exhaust: Dual

Capacity

Oil: 5 quarts
Water (heater): 26.5 quarts
(without heater): 25 quarts
Gas: 18 gallons

General

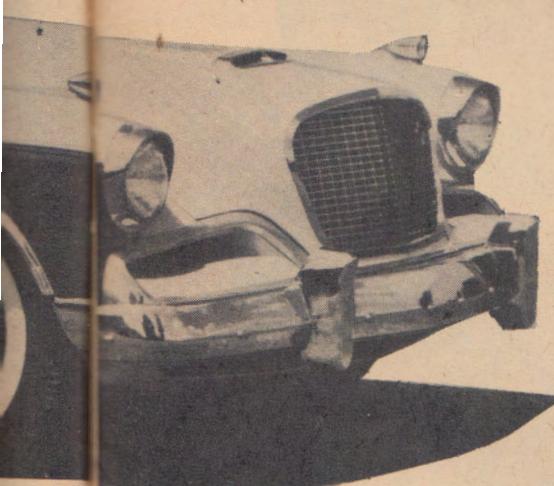
Wheelbase: 120.5 inches
Overall length: 203.9 inches
Overall width: 70.4 inches
Overall height: 56.3 inches
Tread front: 55.36 inches
rear: 55.6 inches
Tires: Tubeless, 7.10 x 15

A great race driver and former Indy
winner gives his opinion of the leader
of the first line of sports cars in America

tests:

Studebaker

GOLDEN HAWK



By BILL HOLLAND

THIS WORLD IS BECOMING quite a confusing place for racing drivers like me. Just a short time ago there were only two kinds of cars as far as I was concerned—the racing car and the passenger car. It was very easy to tell them apart because one was an ultra-fast, stark or almost ugly single-seater and the other was a large, beautifully styled and sedate vehicle that would carry five or six people in complete comfort. "Never the twain shall meet," I thought.

Studebaker has proved I was wrong. Their new Golden Hawk is faster than many race cars, wonderful to look at and roomy enough to carry the whole family. This car is the lead model in a special four-model line of sports-type cars, the first, as far as I know, line of such cars to be introduced by an American auto maker.

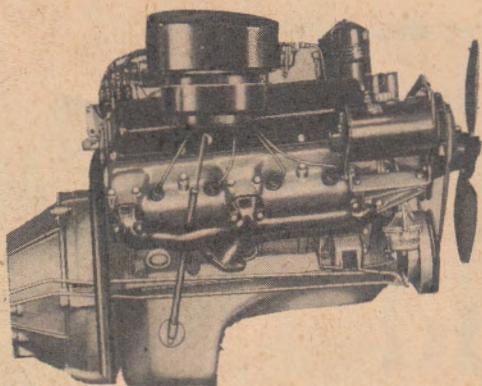
Late in September, 1955, I was lucky enough to become the first person, other than a Studebaker engineer, to drive the Golden Hawk. It was in Detroit, on the fast, banked track on the Studebaker-Packard proving grounds. With many hundreds of miles of racing on the

Indianapolis track behind me I felt completely at home on the big two-and-a-half mile oval so I climbed into the Stude and charged right off.

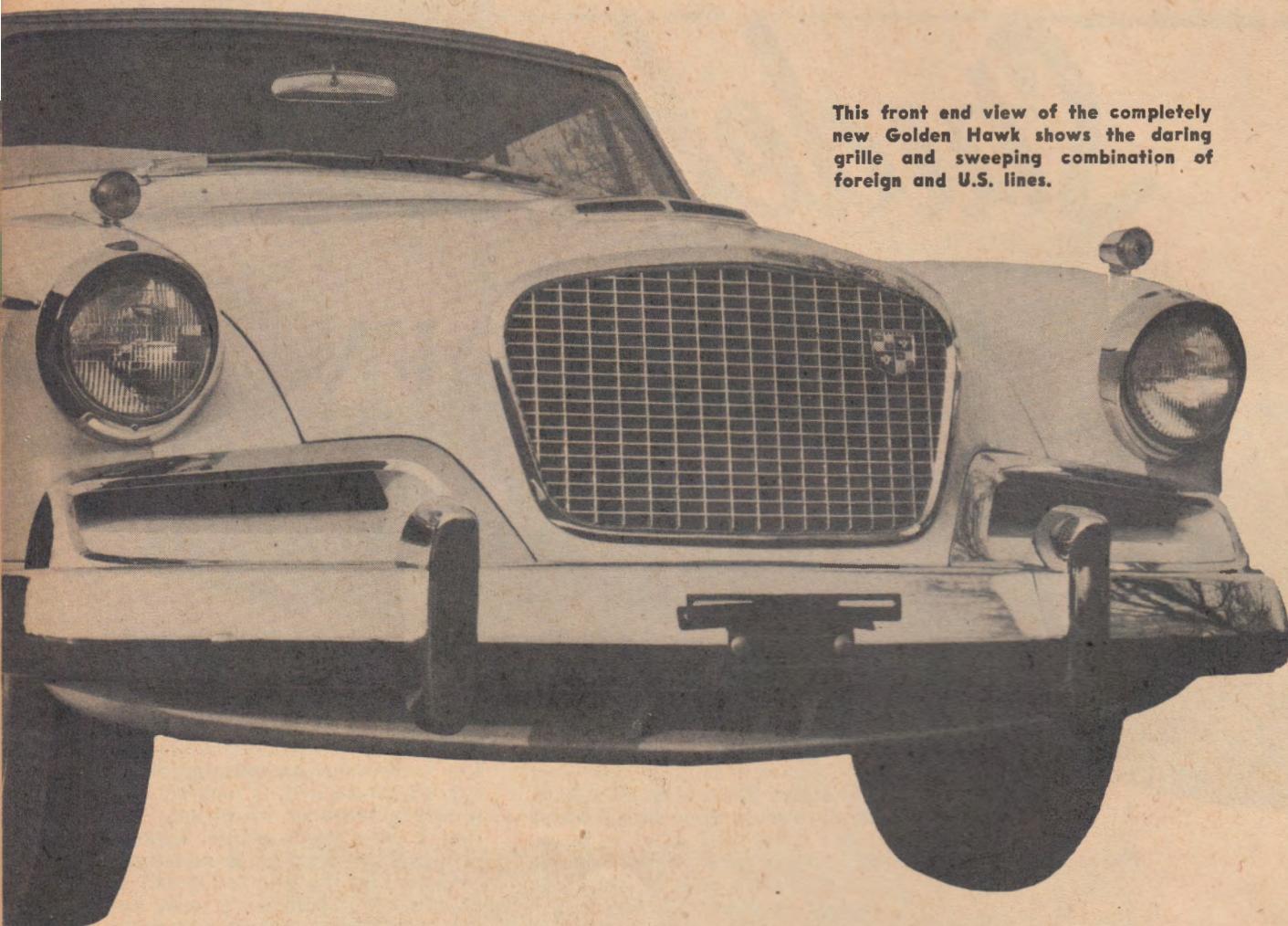
I was impressed immediately with the tremendous acceleration of the car. Floor-boarded, it took off with hardly a trace of wheel spin and roared with turbine-like smoothness well up over the 100-mpm mark without any lag or "flat spots" at all. Round and round I went and the speedometer needle slid easily past the 125-mpm mark.

Finally I came in and checked with the engineers who had been timing me. I was delighted, but not at all surprised to find that the Golden Hawk had done two laps at an average of 121.0 miles per hour on the rain-soaked track. I told them I was impressed. It was an understatement.

Some weeks later, SPEED AGE asked me to go out to the Studebaker proving grounds in South Bend, Ind., to give the Golden Hawk a more thorough workout. Here I was able to run accurate acceleration and braking tests and I got to drive the car over a great variety



The 275-horsepower V-8 engine gives the Golden Hawk the highest horsepower to weight ratio of any volume-built U. S. car.



This front end view of the completely new Golden Hawk shows the daring grille and sweeping combination of foreign and U.S. lines.

of road surfaces. Here's what I found.

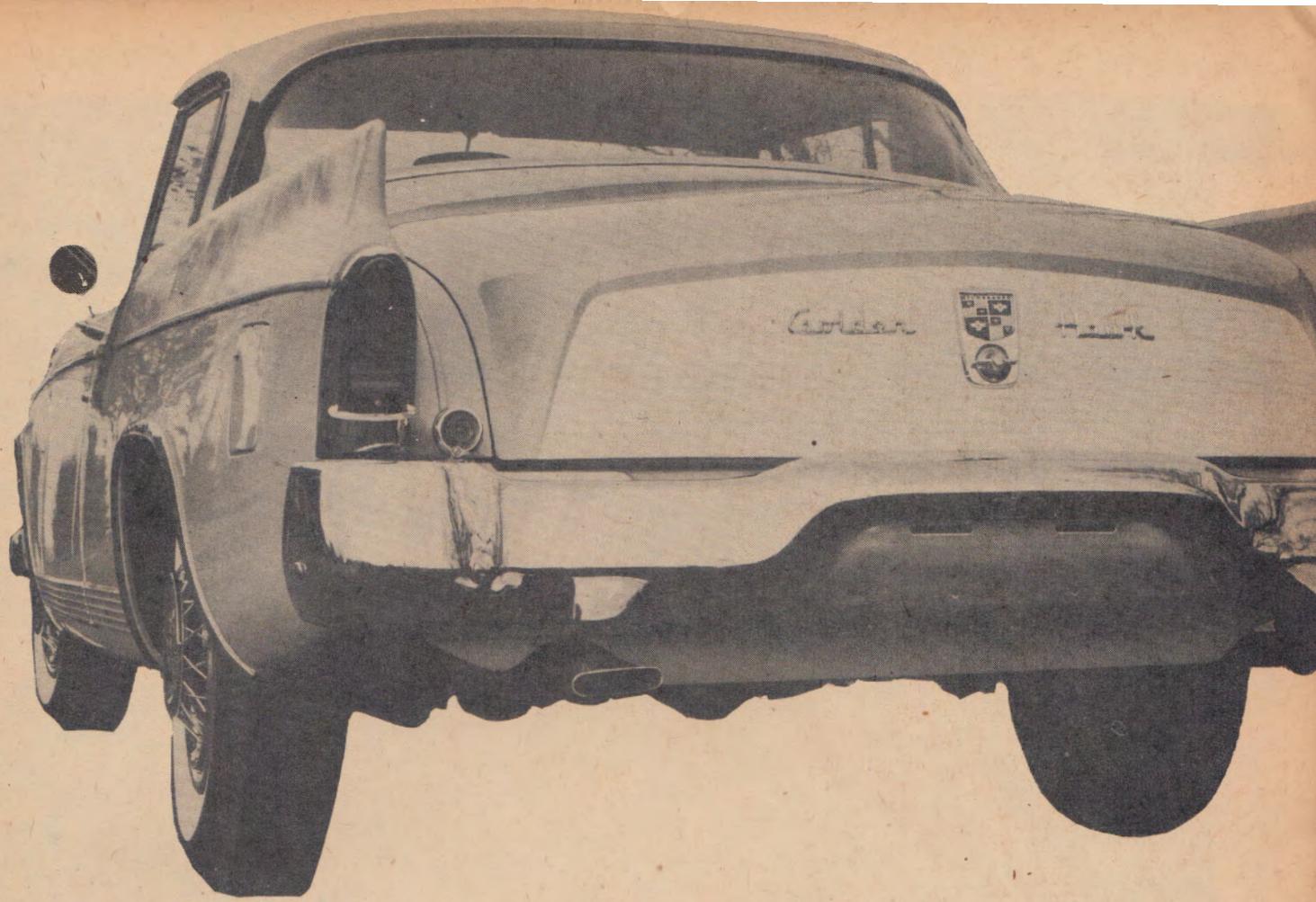
My original impression about the acceleration was easily confirmed. The Golden Hawk is absolutely breathtaking in acceleration, either from a standing start or from any cruising speed up to 80 or 90 miles per hour. From zero to 60 mph took just 9.6 seconds and the car needed only six seconds to go from 30 to 60 mph. That's about 20 per cent faster than the average fast sedan. These figures were gotten with a car equipped with the 1956 Packard Ultramatic transmission. Most of the Golden Hawks will be deliv-

ered with this automatic setup, but a manual three-speed shift and overdrive is also to be made available. You should be able to get even better performance, shifting by hand, and the overdrive will more than likely improve gas mileage if that's what you're interested in.

You may be wondering whether or not the car is hard to drive, or even if it's safe. I will say definitely that this automobile is not a compromise in any way between safety and performance. The power steering is light in operation and not geared too fast for average reflexes, and the new finned brakes

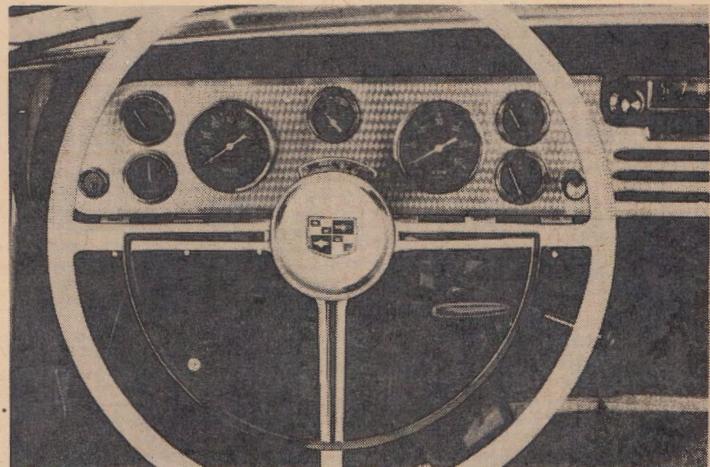
are especially good. The seating position is such that you are always completely relaxed and yet alert, and visibility is excellent all around.

Just under five feet in height, the car has a center of gravity so low that it would be almost impossible to turn it over. I put it through several controlled slides and found it recovered perfectly. It is balanced properly so that it can still be controlled with the steering wheel while it is sliding. This technique will be necessary only in an emergency, of course, but it's nice to know that your car is



Looking at the west end of the GH going east reveals a new concept in rear design. Over fender fins and squared trunk are among the attractions. Notice dual exhausts.

Dashboard incorporates a tachometer and vacuum gauge in addition to standard instruments. Standard safety equipment includes the crash pads for the panel, padding on the back of the front seat.



up to any situation that might arise.

I took the Stude over some bumpy, windy, hilly roads on the test grounds and found that I never once had to "fight" it. The ride is somewhat firmer than on previous Studebaker hardtops, but even on the worst bumps at high speed it never becomes harsh. That roof looks awfully low, but you soon learn that you don't have to worry about banging your head on it.

By now you may have gotten the impression that I like the car. I won't be at all guarded in my opinions; I like it very much. It has all

the power anyone could want, and then some—275-horsepower to be exact. In design, all the Hawk line is in sharp contrast to Studebaker's big new styling of its President, Commander and Champion series. The Golden Hawk is long and low and very sporty, and yet it has none of the disadvantages of the usual sports car. There is an excellent heater and defroster system, a fine radio, plenty of space for luggage and no service problem. Interior finishing is very attractive and the dashboard has enough instruments to satisfy an engineer, including a tachometer and a vacu-

um gauge. Seats are all extremely comfortable and so is the price—factory list \$2800.00. Other models in the line step down in price and aim at combining performance with economy. The Sky Hawk has 210-horsepower V8, the Power Hawk 170-horsepower V8 engine, and the Flight Hawk has a 101-horsepower six-cylinder engine.

When you see your first Golden Hawk on the road, take a good, close look at the driver; it might be me. And I wouldn't be surprised if the second one you saw had another familiar face behind the wheel—your own.