

LETTERS (Continued)

America First . . .

You could lose an awful lot of friends by publishing statements in Misc. Ramblings, such as the one that appeared in May Road & Track as follows. "Actually I am quite confident that if the need arises America could make a better economy car than the VW at the same price."

Let us consider gentlemen that America could not put the quality into an economy car; the result would be a broken down miniature American barge!

Gary R. Cooper
Scotia, New York

Honestly, just what kind of a car could be produced by American manufacturers that would sell (not cost to produce) for about \$1,000 as does the VW in Germany?

Elmer F. Kruse
Cleveland Heights, Ohio

We prefer to choose our friends. Surely this countries' technological leadership in the field of manufacturing know-how can beat any product, produced anywhere. World War II proved it.

If quality is reflected in durability, then consider the fact that in all the world's free markets American cars are acknowledged as being the most durable of any countries' products. We did not say that the American labor costs, but could compete with German labor costs, tag and maintain wages at our present high level.

VW-Sports . . .
All the furor over souping the VW, makes 2 things very clear: 1. The stock machine, both chassis and engine, is great for its designed purpose, but not very suitable for more speed. 2. There is a great demand potential for a VW roadster, similar to the Porsche speedster, but with VW chassis (shortened, and with anti-roll bar) and fair ly stock engine (and price).

If such were produced for say \$1850, I'm sure many who buy the VW for its sporting features would be more satisfied. I would guess the number of U.S. buyers who buy VW's for these reasons would far outnumber the strictly practical-transportation VW purchaser. Perhaps your magazine's great influence can show VW that this type of demand exists and is a strong one. W. L. Phillips
Hutchinson, Kansas

We plugged this same idea in our August, 1955 issue, page 41, estimating the market at 2 to 1 for sports over family cars, at the same price of \$1495/\$1595. We're still waiting.

"Yippee" Cahier . . .
Congratulations to Sebring photographer Bernard Cahier, whose feat of crossing the Amoco bridge while Fitch was driving the lead Corvette 50 feet, will probably never again be duplicated!

This accomplishment was no doubt made doubly difficult by the great mass of humanity which comprises the unauthorized population of the bridge during the start of this great race. L. C. Thomas
Lebanon, Oregon

Bernard does get around but you are so busy taking photos of the Sebring start that you have been credited to Pete Fitch and the Amoco bridge shot to Cahier. Ed.

LETTERS

(Continued)

We Take a Bow . . .

Mr. Geo. L. Martin, writing in the May issue criticizing Road & Track road tests, is a good example of a foreign car owner in the larvae stages of evolution, or as you so aptly put it a "parvenue."

I have owned at least a half dozen cars which have been road-tested both by Road & Track and other publications and have always found R & T to give the truest evaluation of the car. British road tests require the most astute reading between the lines and one British road tester recently wrote that he didn't dare say anything really bad about a car because he might put the maker out of business.

As for Detroit iron, competition has forced our manufacturers in the past two years to produce products with a performance that can now be equalled by less than a half dozen foreign sports cars. In fact the only serious shortcoming—aside from styling of our cars—is the brakes.

However, I am grateful for the Mr. Martins, for without them, I would still be the owner of a number of ghastly automobiles. Newtown Square, Pa. James T. Carson

How Bitter is "Bitter" . . .

I'm still waiting for the replacements needed to repair my gearbox. Of course, three months doesn't seem like long to be without a sports car when the weather's cold, but it still just doesn't seem right somehow.

Of course I'm not bitter or anything like that. I know how these things are. I'll just never own another — as long as I live, that's all.

Chicago, Illinois Alan W. Smith

Jawohl . . .

German-English technical and engineering dictionary by Louis De Vries states: Höchstgeschwindigkeit—top or maximum speed, not "cruising speed" as quoted on page 31, July issue.

Inglewood 5, Calif. Louis B. Pierlot

Fighting Words . . .

I note, in another magazine, that your performance data on the VW-GK is compared and criticized. Furthermore, the editor says that a torque figure of 56 ft.-lbs. is "slightly ridiculous." What do you say?

Chicago, Illinois Bill Gracey

Usually we consider the source, but in this case we will defend the accuracy of our test data. Perhaps we know how to drive VW's to best advantage, based on several years of experience. Perhaps, also, we are unbiased and are not influenced by our own previous tests which plainly stated that no stock VW could "break" 70 mph or 0-to-60 in 30 seconds. If someone else's test shows under 70 mph the car was either (1) sub-standard, or (2) the testing strip was inadequate, or (3) the data is inaccurate or (4) no data was ever taken, except from other magazines. Our 0-to-60 time of 28.8 seconds was an average of the two best runs in opposite directions. We used 64 mph indicated for an actual 60 and also tried two runs using 1st, 2nd and 3rd gears only which recorded 28.2 and 29.4 seconds. Our timed two-way average of 76.0 mph was obtained under absolutely fair and impartial conditions.

The VW factory gives the engine torque as 7.7 mkg at 2000 rpm. Any handbook will give the conversion factor as 7.233. Multiply the two and you have 55.6941 ft. lbs. We called it 56. How ridiculous is that?—Ed.

COMING EVENTS

on page 55

ROAD & TRACK, August, 1956

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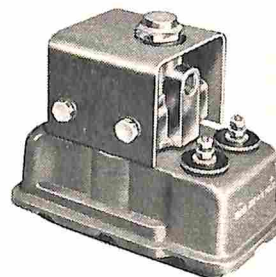
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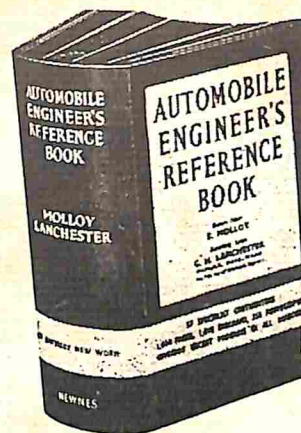
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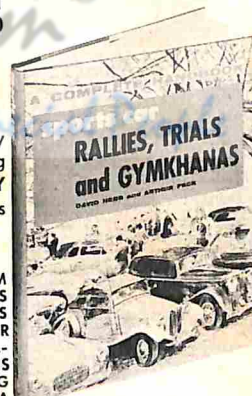
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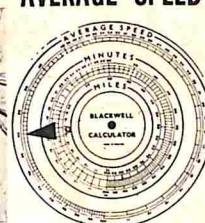
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