

CORVETTE FANS, who were thrilled by recent displays of the XP-700 as an indication of what might lie ahead for future models, can get all the excitement they need behind the wheel of today's 1960 model. We have in mind the Arctic white twin four-barreler with four-speed stick shift that we hated to part with after nearly a thousand miles of highway cruising and 30 "hot laps" on the Riverside International Raceways test course.

Similar "hot laps" on the same course nearly a year ago with the '59 Corvette were recalled as a day filled with fading brakes, the odor of smoke and pulverized rubber seeping into the cockpit, and wild spinning of the inside rear wheel as it left the ground on hard corners. There was also the little item of cracked hubcaps as the wheels flexed under abnormal body lean.

So, with the fifth wheel testing equipment removed and stowed after accelera-



Latest model has handling qualities to match potent power

CORVETTE '60

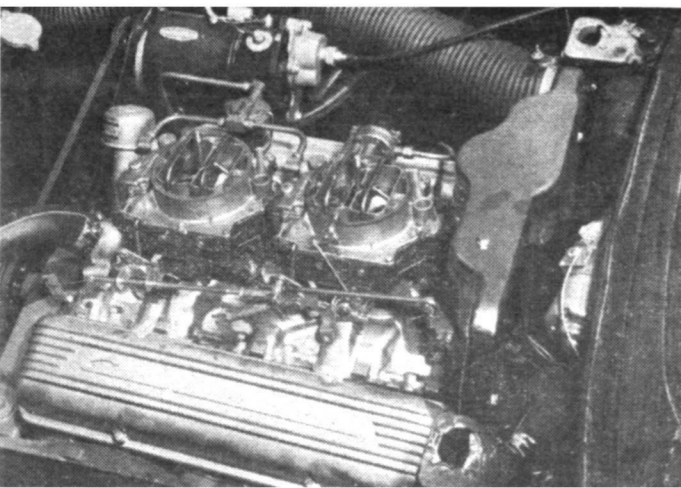
tion tests, and the removable fiberglass hard top safely resting against the timing shack, we donned crash helmet, fastened seat belt, and headed for the first turn. In a car with an engine whose torque can break the rear wheels loose in turns in about any gear, handling, or conventional response to wheel and throttle, is quite important in staying out of trouble when cornering at speed.

Chassis improvements claimed by the manufacturer for the '60 Corvette are certainly true and welcome. We noticed much less body roll due chiefly to a new stabilizer bar that has been added behind the rear axle. Further stability comes from a front bar of thicker material and shallower bends to reduce twist load concentrations. Ride is still comfortable and fairly soft as spring rates and shocks remain unchanged from last year, but rebound distance of rear suspension has been increased one inch. The inside rear wheel stays on the ground, side loading

continued



New rear stabilizer bar and heavier front one keep Corvette flat in corners, prevent inside rear wheel from lifting and spinning. Positive steering and instant throttle response bring fun and safety back to the motoring sport.



Twin 4-bbl. carburetors are part of special power kit that includes Duntov cam. Single, large air cleaner (removed to show carbs) is polished, chrome plated.



Racing-type cockpit, with 3-spoked wheel, short-stroke, positive manual shift, and individual bucket-type seats, is functional for racing, comfortable for road touring.



Well-fitting hatch covers storage space for heavy-duty canvas top that can be raised or lowered quickly by one person without tools. Roll-up windows fit snugly.

on wheels and tires is reduced (we didn't crack any hubcaps), and response to wheel and throttle is definite and predictable.

Brakes have been improved, but only slightly, by better leverage of pedal to reduce braking effort, and slightly larger diameter of front-wheel cylinders. The stock brakes are just not up to the potential of the car and unless it is driven by that "little old lady . . ." the optional ceramic-metallic or sintered iron options are certainly desirable for owners who like to drive Corvettes the way they were built to be driven.

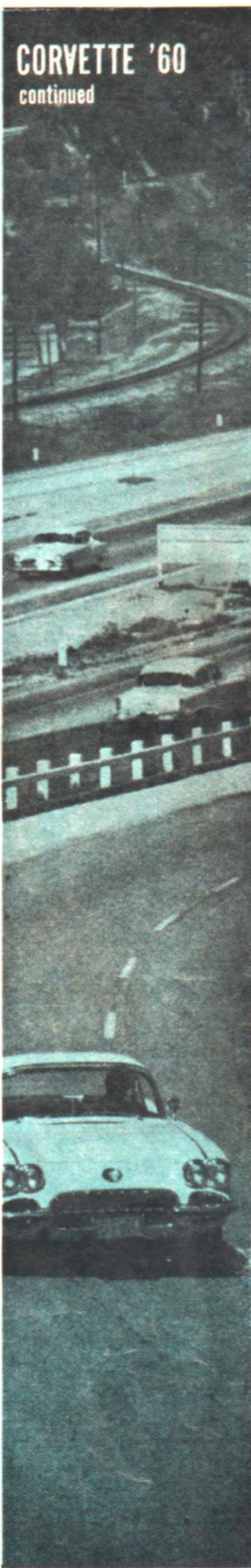
It is not likely that the average person will ever wring his Corvette out on a road racing course, but with the power, speed and acceleration packaged into this sports machine, road racing conditions can unknowingly occur on any highway. That emergency stop from speed, an unmarked blind curve, the necessity of very short passing distances all occur in routine travel and require a car that can handle the job, without jarring your teeth out or torturing your aching back if the pavement is not smooth as glass.

Over the long haul, Corvette comfort for its maximum two-passenger load and minimum of luggage is adequate for average-sized persons. Six-footers and over will find their knees too close to the steering wheel if they do not have the seat adjusting tracks moved back. The roll-up windows and hard top add much to cross-country comfort and bad-weather driving, but Corvette provides a folding canvas top that actually gives more headroom than the hard top, and stows out of sight in its own compartment behind the seats.

Heating and ventilation are good, but the most tiring thing on long trips with hard top on and windows open is wind buffeting the side of the face. Windwings of some sort would certainly make the ride more comfortable.

While styling remains the same on the '60 models with a few more interior colors and deep pile rug offered, other changes, such as propeller shaft drive-line angle, have done much to reduce vibration and noise in the driveline. As of this writing, the announced aluminum cylinder heads for fuel-injected models are not yet available, but all new Corvettes with three- and four-speed manual transmissions have aluminum clutch housings, which are 18 pounds lighter.

Further use of this light metal is in an aluminum cross-flow radiator that increases cooling capacity. It is offered as a regular production option only for special-camshaft engines. The MOTOR TREND test car was equipped with one of these options, and water temperature never went over 180° during maximum-throttle acceleration runs or "hot laps" during the heat of the day. This was especially noted as few stock American



cars are able to go through this phase of road testing without a noticeable increase in water temperature.

Corvette's all-synchro four-speed manual transmission is a joy to use, and shifting is often overdone, due mainly to the ease and convenient location of the short, positive lever. Under ordinary driving conditions, unless it is desired to lay rubber for a block or kick up every traffic officer in the vicinity, engine torque is sufficient to lug out rapidly from 15 or 20 mph in 4th gear. While this is not acceptable to the true "sports car clan," we never heard of anyone hurting a Corvette by lugging down in traffic occasionally. The twin four-barrel carburetors do not load up the engine under these conditions, nor is there any ping. True, shifting down is great, but the temptation to "stand on the throttle" is not always compatible with existing traffic flow.

Shifting also plays an important part in fuel economy, as evidenced by an interesting check made with this car and two entirely different drivers. Driver No. 1 was used to sportscars with comparatively small-displacement engines and manual four-speed transmissions. His average with the Corvette for a week under city traffic and freeway rush hour conditions was 11.4 mpg. Driver No. 2, familiar with large, powerful domestic cars and automatic transmissions, who knew how to handle manual gearboxes but didn't like to shift unless absolutely necessary, drove under practically the same city and freeway conditions during the same peak hours, and turned in a flat 16 mpg. It is a good bet that over the long haul, Driver No. 2 would get better tire mileage and less crankcase dilution than Driver No. 1.

This is a good example of the versatility of the Corvette—it can be enjoyed by speed-minded sportsmen or average daily drivers who like sporty-type cars, and still give service and satisfaction to both.

The public was slow in accepting fiberglass as body material for a production car, although the special builders of such components enjoyed great success. General Motors believed in this pliable, rugged material for car bodies and stayed with it in the face of some pretty rough opposition. As a result, they have continued to improve on their methods of manufacture, materials and assembly to a point where fit, finish and durability leave little to be desired. It is not unusual in Southern California to see the first 1953-'54 model Corvettes with six cylinders and triple side-draft carburetors, their fiberglass bodies still in "cherry" condition.

The Corvette has carved a definite niche in American motoring, and General Motors intends to widen that niche with continued development of this fine, fast two-seater sports machine.

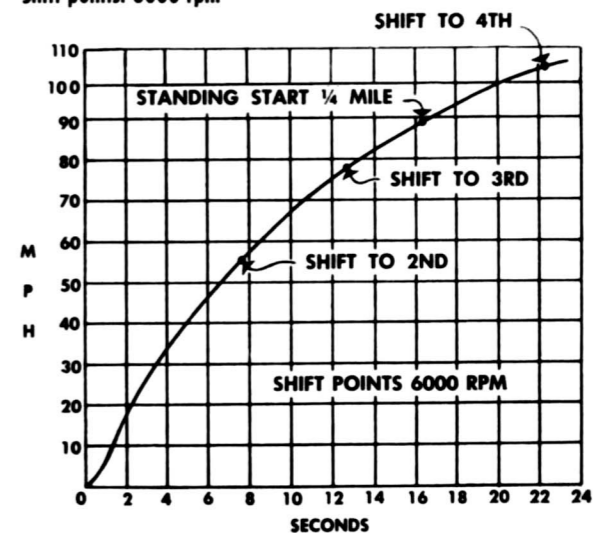


Car At a Glance

THINGS WE LIKE	THINGS WE DON'T LIKE
Smooth, rapid acceleration	Short legroom for tall drivers
All-synchro four speed gearbox	Wind buffeting with windows open
Dual hard and soft top	Slow brake recovery after hood and trunk
Excellent handling	
Excellent finish, tight fit of doors,	

Acceleration

0-45 mph 5.3 secs. 0-60 8.4
 Quarter-mile 16.1 secs., 89 mph
 30-50 3.0 45-60 3.1 50-80 6.9
 Shift points: 6000 rpm



Stopping Distance

From 60 mph to standstill 195 ft.
 (In 4.8 secs., with maximum of 0.69-G deceleration)
 Stop after maximum acceleration to end of 1/4-mile 360 ft.
 (In 6.9 secs. with maximum of 0.74-G deceleration)

Gas Mileage

	Mpg
City traffic and freeway	14.5
Highway, normal cruise	18.6
Highway, fast cruise	17.9