

MAGNETIC EYE-GLASS CASE

NO MORE FUMBLE IN GLOVE-BOX JUMBLE

HANDY SAFE CLEAN

STICKS TO AUTO DASH

MAGNETICASE \$1.00 P.O. BOX 33 HOLLYWOOD 46, CALIF.

WANTED

MEN AND WOMEN

GROW MUSHROOMS. Cellar, shed and outdoors. Spare or full time year round. We pay \$3.50 lb. WE PAID O. Babbitt \$4,165.00 in few weeks. Write for FREE BOOK, Washington Mushroom Ind., Inc. Dept. 270-2954 Admiral Wav. Seattle, Wash.

CUSTOM RAFT

WRAP AROUND CUSTOM GRILLE BAR—NOW YOU CAN REALLY CUSTOMIZE YOUR 1953 FORD



This bar replaces original right and left bars and center bowl on ALL 1953 FORDS. It wraps around the fenders.

Designed for that massive appearance. Easily installed without any alterations. Comes with center trim to match hood moulding clip. Excellent, highly polished, guaranteed triple-chrome plate. Stock No. F-253.

ORDER NOW! \$22.50 Per Set BE THE FIRST!
20% deposit required with all orders.

DETROIT GRILLE MFG., CO
258 E. VERNOR, DETROIT, MICH.

FREE "Bargain Catalog"!

Write today for our new 1956 Catalog of Automotive Accessories and Tools, all offered on FREE TRIAL at BARGAIN PRICES! It's loaded with values that can't be matched—and it's yours FREE!

NEW ENGLAND SURPLUS SALES CO.
DEPT. ML4-6, NEWBURYPORT, MASS.

BIG PAY JOBS
for men who qualify in

DIESEL



TRAIN NOW FOR A DIESEL FUTURE

Steady, high-pay jobs await men qualified in Diesel, Tractor, and Heavy Equipment. Are you qualified for job and advancement opportunities in this fast-growing field? You can qualify!

COMPLETE DIESEL COURSE NOW AVAILABLE

If you are ambitious and want to get ahead in this big money field, you'll want to know about the complete Diesel home training course now offered by Interstate Training Service. Covers all phases of operation, repair, service. Easy to master in spare time. No interference with present job. Up-to-the-minute. Regularly revised to cover new developments. We invite comparison of material offered. Advisory placement service for students.

YOU OWE IT TO YOURSELF to investigate Interstate Training Service Diesel Training. Thousands agree it has helped them to better jobs... better pay. It can do the same for you!

WRITE FOR FREE INFORMATION TODAY!

INTERSTATE TRAINING SERVICE
Dept. A-94, Portland 13, Ore.

Please see that I receive FREE 24-page book, Getting Ahead in Diesel.

NAME _____ AGE _____
ADDRESS _____
CITY _____ ZONE _____ STATE _____

Driver's Report—The 1956 Pontiac

Here's a car that's winning a new reputation—fast

BY KEN FERMOYLE

One of the most surprising developments in the automotive world recently has been the decision of Pontiac to take the plunge into stock car racing—hoping, no doubt, to match the success of brother GM division, Chevrolet. As reported in earlier issues of MOTOR LIFE, the well-known Lou Moore is now connected with Pontiac and will direct racing activities.

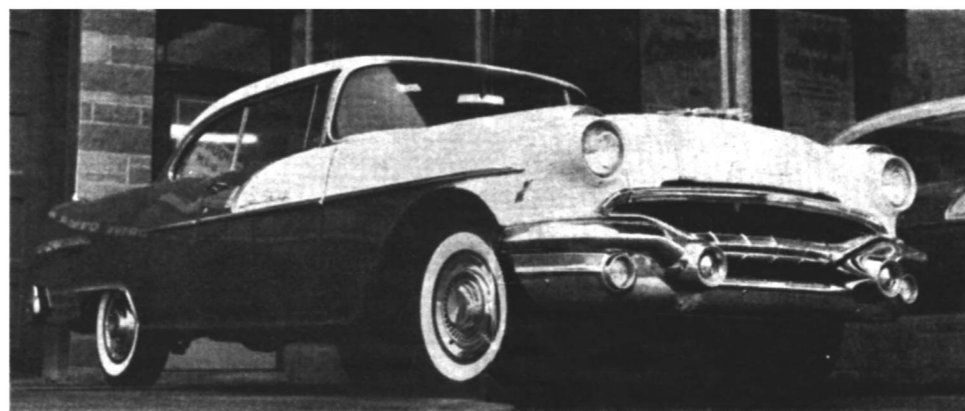
WHAT prompted this rather surprising move? Pontiac in the past had an enviable reputation for reliability, comfort, good resale value and similar virtues. It had never been noted as a particularly hot car, however, and its handling qualities weren't regarded as suitable for competition. Actually this situation began to change with the introduction of 1955 models. A new V-8 plus chassis and suspension improvements gave it a different character. The '55 was the fastest in history and many considered it to be the best handling Pontiac in years.

The '56 is even more so in both departments. Although styling changes were minimal, both engine and chassis were refined. Engine size went from 287.2 to 316.6 cubic inches and power climbed too. When first announced Pontiac offered a choice of a 205 and 227-hp engine, depending on model. Since then a souped version rated at 285 hp has been made available (see Special Reports for details). This factory-hopped V-8 is obviously aimed at the track.

To give MOTOR LIFE readers an idea of what to expect from the new Pontiac, both in stock car racing and on the highway, we arranged to put a Star Chief Catalina two-door hardtop thru the mill. Here's what we found:

The 1956 Pontiac is a remarkably good road car. About 1,000 miles were covered in the Catalina in preparing this report and many of them were on the highway. We found it was very easy to maintain high cruising speeds; easy on the car and easy on the driver. It breezes along at 75 mph and up with no strain. This goes not only for the engine but for the entire car. Most of the high speed driving was done on two-lane roads with more curves to the mile than straight stretches. The Pontiac took them all, the sweeping bends as well as the tight right-angles, in its stride—and took them a lot faster than we expected it was capable of doing.

One of the most surprising things about it was the really excellent power steering system. It was the best I have encountered to date. I usually object to power



steering for highway use because it gives you a feeling of being isolated from the road and you lose the feeling of control a manual system offers. This was less true with the Pontiac than any other power steering-equipped car I've driven. (My only difficulty with the unit occurred when the fluid level got too low and some rather distressing noises resulted. This was cured quickly by adding fluid up to the normal level.)

Another feature contributing greatly to driving ease and comfort was the six-way power seat. It permits an almost infinite variety of seating positions. Personally I like to sit close to the wheel with the seat back in a nearly vertical position. I was able to adjust the Pontiac seat to precisely the position I like; in fact, I found it to be the most comfortable seat for me since the one I revamped and tailored to my desires in an old '31 Chevy I had way back in high school! The many adjustments are particularly good on a trip. You can vary your position slightly just by pushing a button and thus prevent getting that cramped feeling that often occurs.

The Catalina we used, incidentally, was not a car that had been pampered or especially prepared for us. It was pulled out of the company transportation pool and turned over to us. The 1,000 miles or so it showed on the meter had been put on by a variety of company officials. It had the 227-hp engine (the 285-hp V-8 hadn't been announced yet) and, in addition to accessories mentioned, had power brakes, signal-seeking radio with dual rear speakers, heater, new Hydra-Matic—just about everything but air conditioning, in short.

The radio with dual rear speakers deserves special mention. Being a hi-fi fan, I perhaps notice something like this more than many people and I was very impressed. Tone was excellent and it pulled in distant stations extremely well.

This brings us to performance. And it was good; not outstanding by current standards, but more than acceptable. The Pontiac ranked right in with most of the makes it competes with directly in practically all departments. From 0 to 30 mph took an average of 3.6 seconds. Runs from 0 to 60 resulted in an average time of about 11.5 seconds. Passing trucks and slower-moving cars on the road proved that middle- and upper-middle acceleration is adequate for nearly all conditions. Unfortunately it snowed the day we planned to make top speed runs, but earlier I had had the car up to an indicated 110-112 several times and it definitely wasn't wound out completely at that point. One thing to remember, too, in looking over these performance figures is that, as pointed out earlier, this car had not had the benefit of any particular tuning. It was in what you might call average, family car condition. With the 285-hp engine it should really be a bomb! (We hope to be able to tell you more about that soon.)

This report wouldn't be complete without a few words about the revamped Hydra-Matic. About the highest praise you can give it is that it lives up to advance billing! Shifts are far smoother than with the former Dual-Range unit (still used on some Pontiac models), yet the efficiency and good acceleration which has characterized Hydra-Matic among automatic transmissions has been retained. Down-shifting is now possible up to about 70 mph, a big asset for highway passing. Using third, or "city drive range," allows you to move thru traffic at a very good pace.

Fuel economy is good, too. In one stretch of just under 200 miles of high-speed highway driving the Catalina turned in an average of almost 16.5 mpg. This was considered good because the car was being pushed hard; cruising speeds of 70-90 mph were maintained wherever

possible and a lot of gas-burning down-shifting was done in passing. Lower cruising speeds would up this figure considerably. In heavy traffic and making the most of the car's acceleration nearly all the time, the Pontiac averaged about 13 mpg. It must be emphasized that no effort was made to drive conservatively so as to boost gas mileage at any time. We are convinced that the 1956 will uphold Pontiac's traditionally good reputation for fuel economy under normal conditions, however.

A few of the gripes uncovered included more squeaks and rattles than there should have been. This may have been due to lack of corrective service, however, since the car had been used in the company transportation pool. Moving the ash tray from the left of the center glove compartment to the right or passenger side may be a boon for passengers, but it's rough for drivers who smoke. The reach is a little long for comfort—and safety—at high speed. The hood line, higher than most current models, makes for a rather long "blind" area on the road in front of the car. Overhead vision, as is common on most of today's cars due to low roof lines, is not good. A lot of neck-twisting is necessary to see overhead traffic lights and signs.

Another gripe concerns styling—although this is admittedly a matter of personal opinion. The blunt front end treatment and generally over-decorated appearance of the Pontiac is a strike against it in our opinion. Obviously a lot of people don't agree because Pontiac sold well over half a million cars in 1955. However, the design is basically not very functional. Frontal area is relatively high and bright metal trim appears to have been hung on indiscriminately.

Taking everything into consideration, the 1956 Pontiac can be summed up like this:

It is a good all-around automobile, particularly for those who want a little more car than the low-priced makes offer. Power is more than adequate to cope with any situation and ride is firm enough to insure good stability without affecting comfort adversely. It offers a wide range of options and accessories—some of which are outstanding (radio, six-way seat etc.). As to racing, the potential is definitely there. The hot new engine guarantees ample power and, with chassis and suspension modifications permitted under stock car rules, handling shouldn't be a problem. The longer wheelbase as compared to lower priced cars (122 inches on 870 and 860 series models; 124 for Star Chief models) may handicap the Pontiac slightly on quarter-mile tracks and the few road circuits the stockers run. It will make an interesting addition to racing fields, however, and is certain to keep old Pontiac friends and very likely will make some new ones. ●

Which of these Money-Savers can we send you on **FREE TRIAL?**

New! 6-ELECTRODE SPARK-O-MATIC POWER-PLUGS

LIFE GUARANTEE

LIFE Guaranteed to Boost POWER PEP, MILEAGE up 18% —Or New Set FREE!

600% More Spark Action THAN ORDINARY PLUGS



The new Alquist "SPARK-O-MATIC" Hi-Compression Power-Plug is guaranteed the MOST POWERFUL spark plug ever made! Here is what it will do for your car:

- 1 SIX RADIAL-FIRING ELECTRODES** delivers 600% more spark action than ordinary plugs! Gives a hotter, full 360° rotating spark for FAST, powerful, uniform firing in all cylinders. This means higher compression, longer engine life, more mileage, power & pep!
- 2 AUTOMATIC HEAT & GAP CONTROL** Gap is W-I-D-E for fatter spark in cold or slow turning engine—thus gives smoother performance, quicker starting, faster pick-up. Gap "NARROWS" for hotter, better timed spark at high speeds. Result: higher R.P.M. & more power!
- 3 DOUBLE SELF-CLEANING ACTION** Six Slotted electrodes (Patent Pend.) induce flame-cleaning of inner surfaces & insulator "nose." Plugs run CLEANER, cooler, longer! Stops fouling, "ping" & power loss!
- 4 TOUGHEST JET AIRCRAFT-TYPE INSULATORS MADE** Lifetime guaranteed—Diamond-hard; withstands even a hammer blow! Gets rid of heat up to 30 times faster than ordinary porcelain insulators!
- 5 CHROME PLATED SHELLS** protect against rust & corrosion; "Dress's up" engine!
- 6 LIFE GUARANTEE** Built to OUTLAST your engine. Guaranteed to give more H.P., better performance, more gas mileage over a longer operating period than any other spark plug... OR A NEW SET FREE! Reg. List \$1.25 ea. FOR ALL CARS—SPECIAL PRICE IN MATCHED SETS ONLY 98c ea. Postpaid MONEY BACK IF YOU'RE NOT DELIGHTED

MINI-SUPER CHARG'R

guarantees Extra Power on Less Gas

... OR YOU PAY NOTHING!



Famous patented MINI-SUPERCHARG'R uses new "super-charge" principle to give more power on less gas. Pays for itself quickly. Consists of revolving impeller "Blower" & automatic air "breather" valve to mix increased volume of air into the fuel charge with whirlwind force. This atomizes and expands gas molecules; the improved mixture enters cylinders in a more powerful highly explosive state. MINI-SUPERCHARG'R eliminates over-rich mixtures & fuel waste. Better, cleaner combustion is obtained, resulting in reduced "ping," less oil dilution, less valve troubles and longer engine life. Ends "Vapor lock." THOUSANDS OF USERS. Precision built of bronze and aluminum. Easily installed. FULL REFUND IF NOT AMAZED. For all cars: Single Throat Unit for 4 & 6 cyl. cars... \$ 9.95 ppd. Double Throat Unit (for Fords, V-8's, etc.)... 11.95 ppd. "Quad"—4 Throat Unit... 15.95 ppd.

FREE NEW 1956 CATALOG

Everything for TOP POWER! ECONOMY! STYLE!

ALMQUIST ENGINEERING

Dealers Wanted Milford ML64, Pa.

NEW LOW PRICES on 1000's of Newest Speed, Power, Mileage, Racing, Custom Items for ALL cars! Immediate delivery! Finest Brands! SAVE up to 50%. Don't buy till you see this FREE Catalog!

