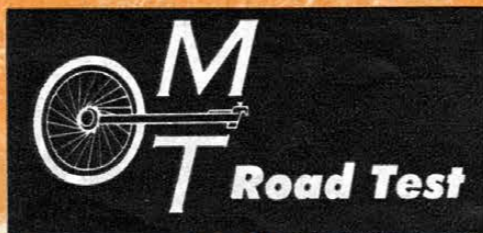


# PLYMOUTH



## SPORT FURY



**A**UTOMOTIVE ROAD TESTERS, on the whole, are probably the biggest cynics in the world. They work under a constant barrage of wildly optimistic claims from factory, advertising and public relations types about the merits of this or that automobile. All too often these claims are wholly imaginative, and as a result the tester develops a kind of deafness in one ear — for turning toward these people.

But every once in a while one of these jokers slips us a curve — a car that actually lives up to its adjectives. In a few really rare instances we even get a car about which we don't think *enough* is being said. This is the way we feel about the new Plymouth Sport Fury.

This surprise package arrived at our door amid a fanfare of silence. About the only advance word we had on it was from the local Plymouth PR man, who said he was sending

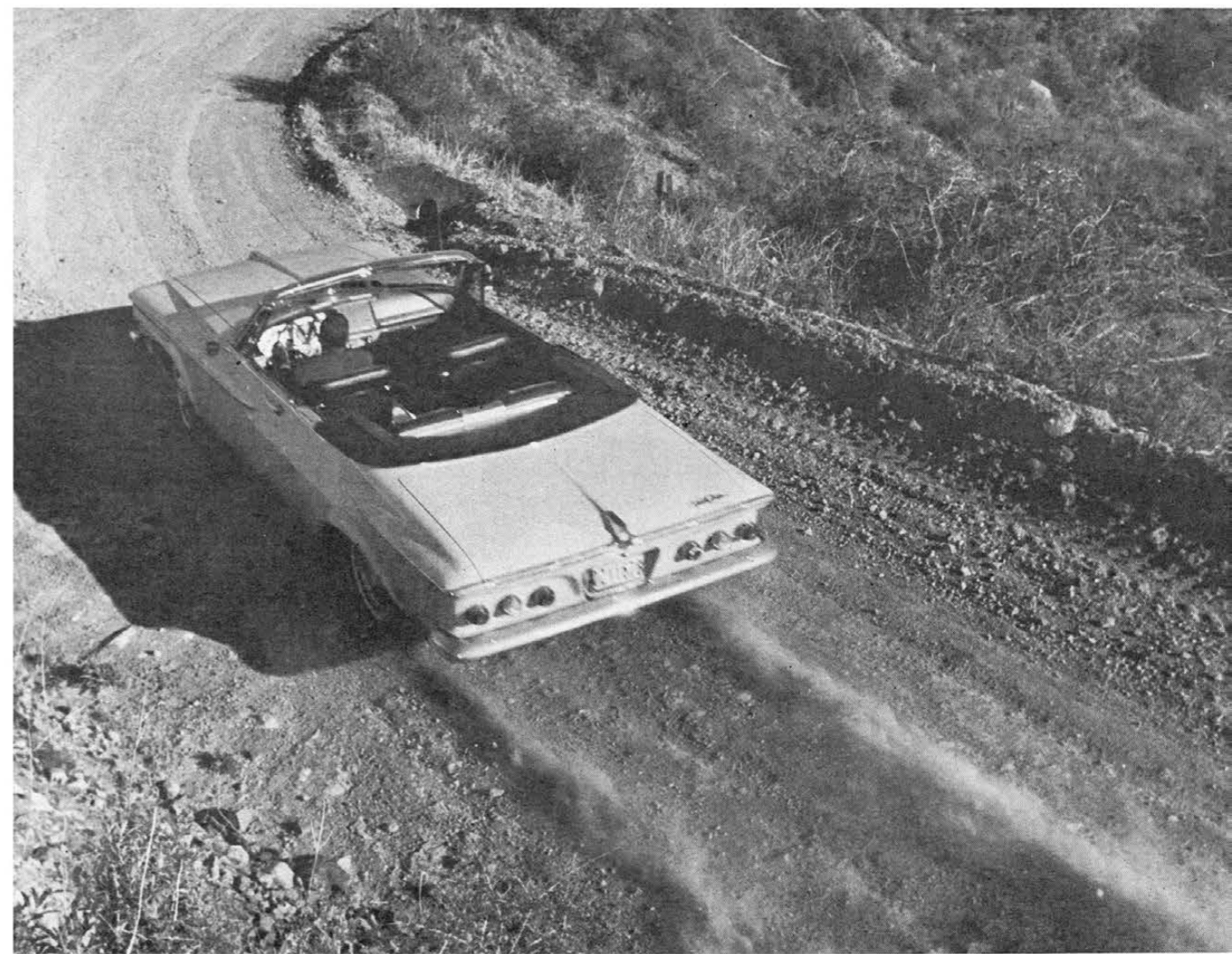
it over and added (in the understatement of the year), "I think you'll like this one."

The Sport Fury is available either as a convertible or a hardtop. Our test car was a convertible equipped with just about everything except air conditioning — power steering, power brakes, Torqueflite transmission, plus a whole batch of other etcetera, including "Golden Commando Power." We were just a little leery about this last item. Anything with a name as cornball as this was bound to be a dud. After putting over 1000 miles on this bomb, we've decided that no matter what they call it, we'd like to have it.

We had to put 400 miles on the car to break it in properly. This was done around the city, so we didn't really get a hint of the type of performance this car was really capable of. It felt real mild in traffic, with maybe just a whisper of rough-

### This surprise package of top performance puts Plymouth's personal-type sports vehicle out in front of the pack

by Jim Wright, Technical Editor



EXCELLENT HANDLING CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SPORT FURY MAKE IT A REAL STORMER THAT INSPIRES CONFIDENCE ON ANY ROAD SURFACE.

# Plymouth Sport Fury

*continued*

ness at idle — the kind of a car that your maiden aunt could get around comfortably in. Out on the drag strip the Sport Fury's true character came to light — it turned out to be a real Jekyll-and-Hyde type.

Style-wise this car is bound to stir up a few arguments (people seem to either love it or hate it). Performance-wise it leaves nothing to be desired. It's a car that gives everything that it has, and then some. Our 0-to-30, 0-to-45 and 0-to-60-mph times were lightning fast at 3.2, 5.1 and 7.7 seconds. The quarter-mile was blasted at 90.5 mph with an e.t. of 16.5 seconds.

When you stop to consider that the MT test car weighed close to 3800 pounds loaded, had a 3.23 rear axle, automatic transmission and was equipped with an engine that is rated at only 305 hp, you'll see what we meant when we said it's a car that gives its all. The 361-cubic-incher is small compared to some of the other high-performance offerings, and its 9-to-1 compression ratio is also low by comparison. The usable power and torque curves seem to be spread over a wide range, with the power peak being reached at 4800 rpm and 395 lbs.-ft. of torque at 3000 rpm. Their combination of rather mild cam timing (252 degrees duration and 26 degrees overlap) with a slightly radical lift (.430-inch) seems to be the secret here. Carburetion is by a single four-barrel.

Traction was excellent, with rear wheels breaking loose just enough and without a trace of axle wind-up.

We can't help but feel that a portion of this performance is made possible by the excellent Torqueflite automatic transmission. With its positive, slip-free shifts, it's the closest thing

to a manual box there is. In DRIVE position it upshifts from first and second at 4500 rpm. By choosing either FIRST or SECOND positions it will stay in either gear until you're ready to shift. We wound it all the way to 6000 rpm in the lower gears, and there wasn't the slightest sound of protest from the engine. It has never been proved to us that, all things being equal, a car equipped with a manual transmission can beat the Torqueflite.

For just a little more go there is a 3.55 axle, plus a variety of speed-shop-type goodies, available in the factory catalog. We haven't heard but we imagine the all-out racing ratios are also available on special order.

Fuel consumption was satisfactory. Like all cars equipped with a four-barrel, the trick in getting good mileage is to keep



*Spare location takes up some of the usable area in the trunk. Lip is high and will interfere slightly with loading and unloading procedures.*



*Interior detailing is very good on this model. Seats are comfortable and adjustment allows plenty of front and rear legroom. Configuration of the glove box might allow things to spill out if the door is opened too suddenly.*



**NEUTRAL WITH FINAL OVERSTEER PRODUCES THAT FINE "LIKE IT WAS ON RAILS" FEELING THAT IS INHERENT IN A TRUE SPORTS MACHINE.**

the secondary barrels closed as much as possible. By doing this, we managed one stretch of heavy city and freeway driving with an average of 17.8 mpg. But this is pretty hard to do when you're driving a real performer (at least, it is for us), and the rest of our figures are in the 10-to-15-mpg range, with an overall average of 13.8 mpg for over 1000 miles. On long trips one can expect anything from 18 to 21 mpg.

The ten-inch brakes are about average (there's an 11-inch option that we'd prefer). Our 30- and 60-mph panic stops took 35 and 179 feet, respectively. The wheels had a slight tendency to lock up, but the stops were all straight-line. We didn't notice any sign of fade during the test, but later, when we were blasting through the mountains looking for picture locations we detected a slight amount of pedal hardness. At this point you could have grilled steaks on the drums but they were still working good and didn't pull in either direction.

Chrysler products' roadability is the best one can get in a domestic car, and the Sport Fury wasn't any exception. Up in the mountains, on secondary roads or out on level super-highways they're always a pleasure to handle. Lean is a bit more pronounced in the corners than it was last year, due to the inch-longer, reduced-diameter torsion bars. Also a chuck-hole taken at speed will cause a bit more bounce, but the car still recovers quickly, with no feeling of loss of control. A stiffer set of shocks would help or cure both of these minor problems.

The power steering drops the lock-to-lock steering wheel turns required down to  $3\frac{1}{2}$  and should be included on every buyer's list of options. We've heard a lot of people say they can't stand power steering because they can't get the proper

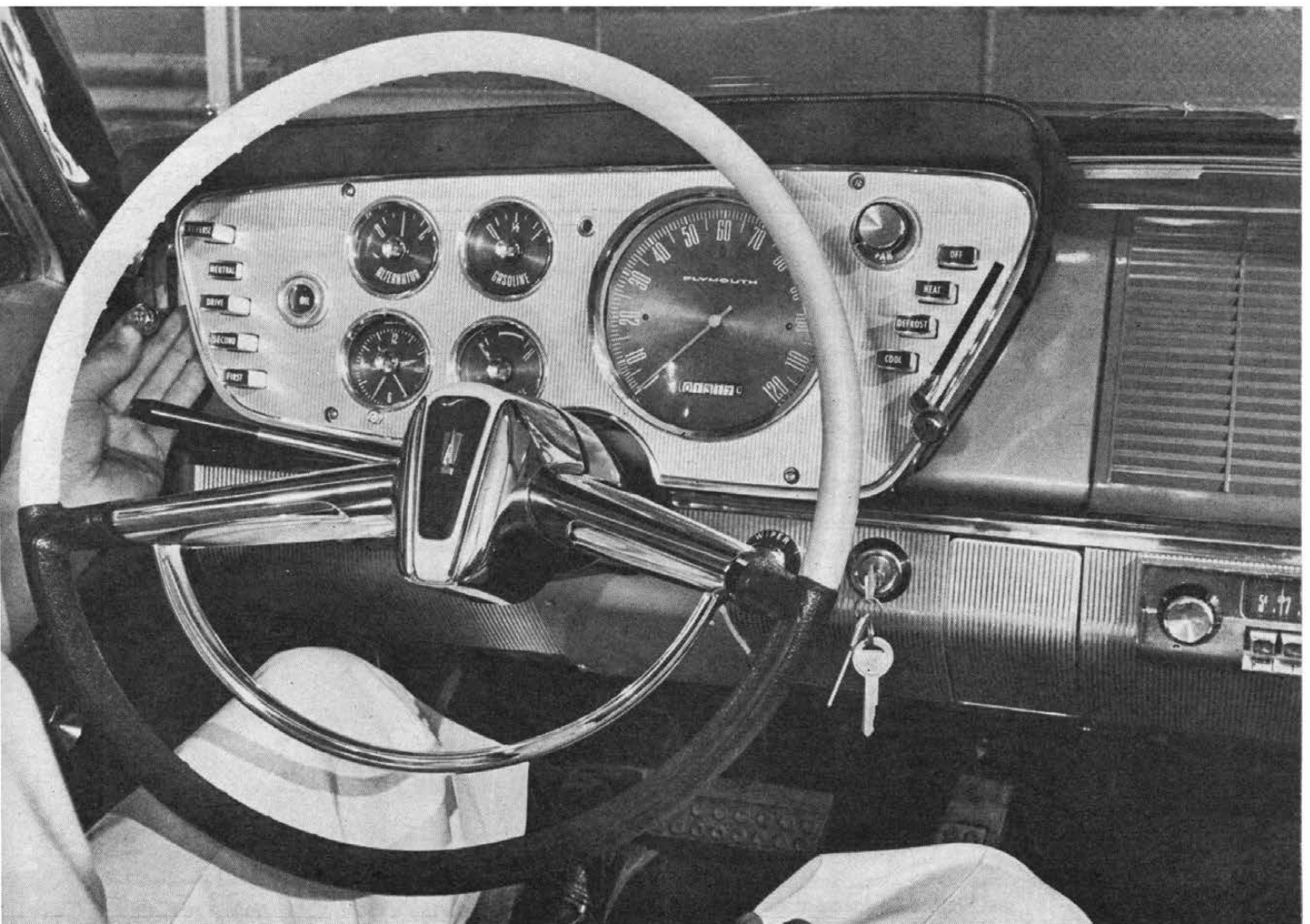


*View from the rear during a hard right shows that the rear behaves as well as the front. Comparison between rigid and swing axle can be made by turning to page 26.*

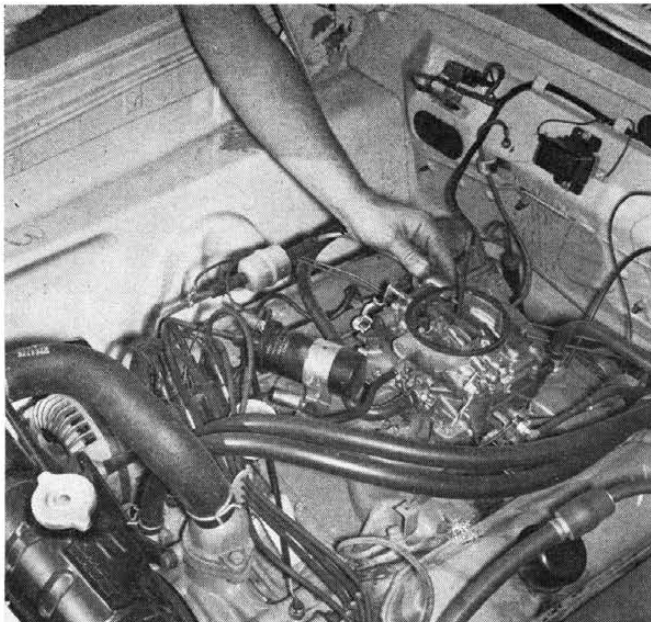
## Plymouth Sport Fury *continued*



CAR GOES GOOD IN THE QUARTER. WE'RE LOOKING FOR IT TO BE A STRONG CONTENDER FOR TOP HONORS AT THE DRAG STRIPS THIS YEAR.



INSTRUMENTATION IS EASY TO READ AND INCLUDES ONE OF THE BEST-LOOKING SPEEDOS WE'VE SEEN — STILL NEEDS AN OIL PRESSURE GAUGE.  
50 MOTOR TREND/APRIL 1962



Even with power steering and brake accessories, there seems to be enough room to get at the servicing points on the engine. Four-barrel carburetor is a real asset.

feel of the road with it. At one time we said the same thing, but after driving them all and getting used to them we wouldn't be without it — on domestic cars. We can corner just as hot with power steering and just a bit smoother because it forces us to use a bit more finesse and deliberation. Up in the mountains it will take an awfully good driver in an awfully good import to pass an equally good driver in the Sport Fury.

Quality control seemed to be above average on our test car. Exterior detailing was properly done, with all panels and trim aligned and with a minimum of spacing between them. The body was tight for a convertible, and at speed no vibrations or road noises were transmitted to the driver. As in all convertibles, wind noise is high at cruising speeds. The only rattles we could detect were in the top mechanism. These were of such a minor nature that they didn't cause any annoyance. The doors rattle a bit when you slam them but are quiet when the car is in motion. As in all Chrysler products this year, the door windows have a backward rake to them. This looks very nice, but when they are up we found that we were constantly banging into, or catching our clothes on, the protruding corner.

Interior detailing also reflected a high degree of quality control (as a car with a price tag like this should). The bucket seats were well upholstered and comfortable. Fore-and-aft adjustment was adequate for legroom, but we found that the steering wheel was too close for our particular driving position. Rear seat leg-, hip- and headroom were adequate for three average-sized adults. Safety padding on the passenger side is standard equipment on this model.

The instrument panel was well arranged and contained an easy-to-read gauge for everything but oil pressure. The large, round speedometer is graduated in increments of one mph and is one of the most business-like we've seen.

Due to the height of the dash and because the hood line is about three inches above the fender, we couldn't see the right front fender at all. This could present a problem to some drivers for diagonal parking or on narrow streets.

Another thing we liked about the Fury was its size. Its 116-inch wheelbase makes it an "in-between." This is two inches shorter than last year's comparable model. Overall length has been reduced over seven inches, and as a result there's very little excess sheet metal or weight left in the design.

With all the manufacturers in the act, this promises to be a big year for personal-type sport vehicles. The Plymouth Sport Fury rates with the best of them. /MT

## PLYMOUTH SPORT FURY

5-passenger convertible

**OPTIONS ON CAR TESTED:** "Golden Commando" engine, automatic transmission, power brakes, power steering, radio, heater, whitewall tires, tinted glass

**BASIC PRICE:** \$3082

**PRICE AS TESTED:** \$3781.75, plus tax and license

**ODOMETER READING AT START OF TEST:** 265 miles

**RECOMMENDED ENGINE RED LINE:** 6000 rpm

### PERFORMANCE

#### ACCELERATION (2 aboard)

0-30 mph	3.2 secs.
0-45 mph	5.1
0-60 mph	7.7

Standing start 1/4-mile 16.5 secs. and 90.5 mph

Speeds in gears @ 4500 rpm

1st	41 mph	3rd	110 mph
2nd	70 mph		

Speedometer Error on Test Car

Car's speedometer reading	30	45	50	60	70	80
Weston electric speedometer	29	42	47	57	67	77

Observed miles per hour per 1000 rpm in top gear 24.5 mph  
Stopping Distances — from 30 mph, 35 ft.; from 60 mph, 179 ft.

### SPECIFICATIONS FROM MANUFACTURER

#### Engine

Ohv V-8  
Bore: 4.12 ins.  
Stroke: 3.38 ins.  
Displacement: 361 cubic inches  
Compression ratio: 9.0:1  
Horsepower: 305 @ 4800 rpm  
Horsepower per cubic inch: 0.84  
Torque: 395 lbs.-ft. @ 3000 rpm  
Ignition: 12-volt coil

Rear: Semi-elliptic — parallel longitudinal 6-leaf  
Steering: Rack and sector (power)  
3.5 turns lock-to-lock

#### Wheels and Tires

Steel disc; 5 lugs  
7.00 x 14 4-ply tires

#### Gearbox

3-speed automatic; pushbutton controls

#### Brakes

Hydraulic; self-energizing, self-adjusting  
Front and rear: 10.0 x 2.5  
Effective lining area: 195.2 sq. ins. (Optional 234.1)

#### Driveshaft

Open tube; one piece

#### Differential

Hypoid  
Standard ratio 3.23:1 (performance axle)

#### Body and Frame

Full unitized  
Wheelbase 116.0 ins.  
Track, front 59.4 ins., rear 57.5 ins.  
Overall length 202.0 ins.  
Turning diameter 40.3 ft.  
Curb weight 3395 lbs.

