

# Barracuda for 1967

*The Game is Ponycar Poker:  
Plymouth Raises One . . . Who'll Call?*

A PONYCAR POKER game is on and Plymouth just raised. It sweetened the pot substantially for 1967 with the casual flip of a blue chip called Barracuda. The other players around the table, including two new hombres dealt in for this round, still sit steely-eyed and emotionless, but the game is tense. When Joe Buyer calls this hand, Plymouth might be raking in more riches than it figured.

The singular new body style, for the moment, seems almost enough to win for Barracuda. And if it wins big, it might be hard-pressed to deliver. A production schedule of 100,000 copies, more Barracudas than Plymouth has

built to date, has been undertaken to back up that bet. That number may not be enough, but, if not, Plymouth is using the enormous Dodge main plant in Hamtramck to build them and extra capacity can be scheduled.

Can a fastback station wagon go it alone against even more numerous odds this year, particularly when it hasn't managed to accomplish this much during the past two years? There is every reason to believe that it can. The new Barracuda is a particularly handsome automobile, possessing some well thought out appointments to enhance the enjoyment of multiple interests by its owner. Big new power is

under its longer (and wider) hood. An unparalleled selection of factory-installed rubber is offered to match every shade of ride and or handling color. But most of all, it's simply (and it's that, too) a neat car.

That the Barracuda could come out of the same styling studio as the other Chrysler-Plymouth cars is something that could only happen in Detroit. The contrast is striking, almost as if the other cars in the showroom were meant to serve as a background of broken straw, the better to display this hand-rubbed sculpture. Yet, the same man who heads the Imperial styling staff, Dave Cummings, bore the re-



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sponsibility for molding Barracuda's seductive shape.

Earlier Barracudas are shamed by the suavity of the new generation, but they did have their rationalization. When it was initially designed, the signs pointed to a floodtide of fastbacks having that inherent drawback of impossible rearward vision. To overcome this, a gross enormity of a rear window was substituted for sheet metal. The specialty car was launched in an almost dead heat with Mustang. Immediate results of market research data proved Barracuda Mark I was destined to be a mere stop-gap product, so the initial shape for the 1967 Barracuda was committed to clay within seven months.

Because '67 was the year for a new Valiant/Dart body (which Barracuda must of necessity share), there was the

added bonus of changing the dimensional hardpoints and, hence, the car's proportions. Nothing about the new body is radically different from previous models (unless curved side windows can be considered radical), but the front wheels are moved 2 in. farther forward, increasing the wheelbase to 108 in. and improving weight distribution with the larger V-8 engines. Front side-rails of the unitized body are spread 2 in. farther apart, making front tread that much wider and expanding the engine compartment. While the windshield shape has been altered to accommodate the curved side windows, its rake remains as before and the cowl assembly continues almost unchanged.

Extended sheet metal, along with the forward relocation of the front wheels, gives a hood which is more

than 4 in. longer than before—6 in. longer than that of the new Valiant—and achieves a better proportioned appearance. The ribbed aluminum plates atop the hood, standard on all Barracudas as a stylized representation of an intercooler, actually have a purpose: They decorate the longitudinal creases required to stiffen the broad hood. Otherwise, they are non-functional because (a) that area of the hood is a low pressure area ill-suited for taking in carburetor air, and (b) fumes from older, well-worn engines would escape through such an opening to drift back into the cowl-top ventilation inlet.

Barracuda's "original signature" of parking lights, centered upon the open grillework of a split front end and staying lit even while the headlights are on, returns after a year's absence. The arrangement provides a special nighttime identity that appeals to owners, as the company learned from a deluge of gripes when it temporarily discarded the motif. Plymouth product planners, however, resisted the trend toward peekaboo headlights, though admittedly an emotional feature, because they extract a penalty in added front-end weight (up to 10 lb. for motors) and could be a source of potential breakdown.

**PARKING LIGHTS** which remain illuminated when headlamps are turned on return as the Barracuda "original signature" after a model year's absence.



DAVE EPPERSON PHOTOS

**A**T THE REAR, the huge glass window has been replaced by a much less cumbersome one of 1660 sq. in. However, rearward vision is little affected because the driver's eye level is on a plane at which blanking out is narrowest between the rear window and the side opening. Production engineers saved the stylists from embarrassment by vetoing a pronounced backbone ridge that had been planned for the fastback. Nevertheless, the objective of grocery sack depth in the trunk was realized by rounding off the top slightly higher. The trunk lid, incidentally, extends down to bumper height and the spare is carried under a cover in the floor to maintain a flat trunk floor.



The Barracuda design required some intricate engineering to replace that structural strength lost in removal of rear seat back reinforcements. A structural bridge now extends between wheel wells just behind the rear window, though it is smaller than before and no longer serves as a cockpit ventilation outlet. More importantly, a stamped reinforcing brace extends upward from the wheel housing just behind the side windows, connecting at each side with a sturdy top crosspiece by means of a strong, forging-like dog-leg. Happily, Plymouth people avoid the temptation to call this a rollbar and it provides the necessary rigidity to the rear without heroics. So much structure (and so much glass) at the rear, however, has resulted in a somewhat heavier than expected body, though it does improve static weight distribution.

Inside the car, there has been an obvious tendency to use bare metal as part of the business-like styling scheme. Around the headers and side window sills and in the rear seat area, the metal is simply painted rather than the textured, vinyl-clad metal trim used in competing cars. The fold-down rear seat has been redesigned, having a central latch to lock it either up or down in place of the earlier "towel" bar. With seat back folded and trunk access panel open, an entirely flat cargo compartment for hauling skis, scuba gear, or complete camping equipment accompanies the sportsman-driver. As a matter of fact, sleeping bags could be laid out inside to provide a private campground on wheels.

A bench-type front seat with fold-down armrest is standard for Barracuda, unlike most of its competition, though newly designed bucket seats (with optional headrests) and console can be ordered. Cabin ventilation outlets, moved from underneath the rear window, now have been integrated into the door panels. A grille at the lower rear corner allows interior air to be

ducted forward to an outlet in the front "shut face." The arrangement is primarily to prevent interior pressurization, which causes side window bulging, rather than to provide true flow-through ventilation. Another outlet is evident to the right of the rear window; it is used to de-fog the huge pane.

**C**HRYSLER'S HAPPY, free revving 383-cu. in. V-8 has a new home in the Barracuda's enlarged engine compartment. The 225-cu. in./145-bhp Slant Six and the 273/180 V-8 continue as basic engines for the car. However, the 4-barrel equipped, 235-bhp 273 remains the heart of the Formula S package (identified, as one Plymouthian said, "by the Superman medallion on the side"). The larger engine, long a workhorse in other fine performing corporation cars, keeps the Barracuda competitive with other big bore Pony-cars. Enough speed equipment is available, additionally, to insure it remains more equal than most in this regard.

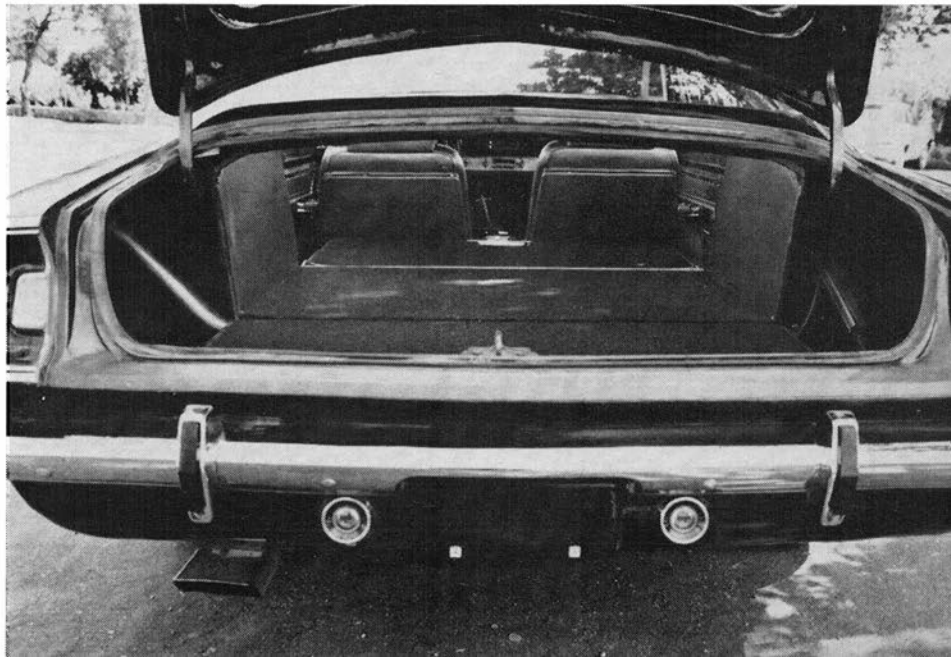
The big engine is not without attendant problems. When equipped with the torque converter automatic, curb

weight increases 265 lb. This is because the 383 requires the larger cars' 8.75-in. rear axle and heavier transmission in place of the Barracuda's regular 7.25-in. axle and smaller automatic. The weight difference is only 140 lb., however, when the 4-speed manual transmission is attached to the 383. With either transmission, the engine churns out 425 lb.-ft. of torque, enough to plague potential challengers as well as standard axles.

An additional 383-induced problem was overcome by building new, somewhat contorted, exhaust manifolds. These were necessary to provide clearance for the steering gearbox and shaft, but, even so, the left header barely makes it. The fit actually is so close that steering column shift levers were ruled out, there being no room for the lower shifting fingers to move. A 383 with automatic can only be ordered with console and bucket seats.

Buyers have no option on brakes with the 383. The front wheel caliper discs which are optional for lower-powered Barracudas are standard equipment with the big engine. Of

**FOLD-DOWN** rear seat has a central latch to lock it either up or down instead of the previous "towel" bar. Barracuda's broad cargo area is entirely level.





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Kelsey-Hayes design, the discs are 11.12-in. ventilated cast-iron rotors used in conjunction with 10 x 1.75-in. rear drums. Non-disc-equipped Barracuda V-8s carry 10 x 2.25-in. front drums with these same rear drums. Nine-in. drums, 2.25 in. wide in front and 2 in. wide at the rear, are supplied for all 6-cyl. models.

All basic Barracudas roll on 14-in. wheels, 4.5 in. in rim width; however, there are 5.5-in. wide rims on optional versions. While a variety of OEM ray-on 6.95-14 tires are supplied as standard, the Formula S package comes

equipped with D70-14 Firestone Wide Oval Super Sport nylon tires. Goodyear Blue streaks have been discontinued with the appearance of Wide Ovals. The previously used tires had a narrower cord angle (27° vs. 30°) and slightly higher speed parameters (120 mph test speed, 140 mph burst speed), but they suffered somewhat in wet pavement traction. Unlike the "police tread" of big blocks of rubber on the Blue Streaks, the Wide Ovals have smaller tread blocks cut by a multitude of squeegee-like sipes that improve wet road handling.

Another tire option for all Barracudas is radial ply tires, built domestically by B. F. Goodrich and advertised as "firm ride" tires. The greatly improved handling qualities inherent in these tires and their typically longer mileage and reduced rolling resistance finally convinced Plymouth engineers to offer them despite the recognized sacrifice in low speed riding quality. The overly generous wheel cutouts of the Barracuda, however, almost demand fat tires such as Wide Ovals to fill them for appearance reasons.

**A**LWAYS A NOTEWORTHY example of performance and handling for its class, Barracuda now enhances those qualities with a visually exciting and tautly styled body. "We wanted to make it a functional, Go-Stop-and-Handling package," Plymouth product planner Gene Weiss remarked at the car's preview, "getting as much of the appearance aspect out of it as possible, if necessary." If a buyer wants to dude up the car's simple shape, he can pay extra for such things as the rocker sill moldings and the wheel covers with poke-through lug nuts (the racing-style snap-open gas cap, however, is standard).

Plymouth is keeping one more ace in hand, too. A convertible Barracuda definitely is forthcoming, though its timing still is uncertain. The soft top is referred to in company specifications and is assured, if for no other reason, by the absence of a Valiant convertible. It apparently will be delayed beyond the hardtop's Thanksgiving weekend debut, but it's coming. And with a poker hand like all that, is there any wonder why the Ponycar poker game is so tense?

## 1967 BARRACUDA FORMULA S

### Technical Specifications

Wheelbase, in.....108.0	Brakes, optional .....front disc/drum rear
Tread, f/r.....57.4/55.6	Disc dia., in.....11.12
Overall length, in.....192.8	drum dia., in.....10.0
width.....71.6	swept area, sq. in.....314.7
height.....53.4	
Box volume, cu. ft.....425.2	Springs, front (torsion bar) .....35.8 x 0.87
Frontal area, sq. ft.....21.2	ride rate, lb./in.....103
Head room, front.....37.4	rear (leaf).....55 x 2.5
rear.....36.5	ride rate, lb./in.....136
Hip room, front.....57.1	Steering, overall ratio.....28.7
rear.....57.1	turns, lock to lock.....5.3
Leg room, front.....40.8	fast manual, ratio.....19.15
rear.....31.4	turns, lock to lock.....3.6
Curb weight, lb.....3141	power assisted, ratio.....18.79
Distribution, f/r, 2 pass.49.8/50.2	turns, lock to lock.....3.5
Wheel size.....14-5.5J	Axle ratio, std.....3.23
Tire size, std.....6.95x14	optional.....2.93, 3.55, 3.91
performance.....D70x14	
radial ply.....175Rx14	

### Engines

	Base	Std. V-8	Formula S	Optional
Type.....	1L 6, ohv	V-8, ohv	V-8, ohv	V-8, ohv
Displacement, cu. in.....	225	273	273	383
Bore, in.....	3.40	3.63	3.63	4.25
Stroke, in.....	4.125	3.31	3.31	3.38
Compression.....	8.4	8.8	10.5	10.0
Bhp @ rpm.....	145 @ 4000	190 @ 4200	235 @ 5200	280 @ 5200
Torque @ rpm.....	215 @ 2400	260 @ 1600	280 @ 4000	425 @
Valves, duration, int.....	240	240	248	256
exh.....	236	240	248	260
overlap.....	16	16	26	32
intake dia., in.....	1.62	1.78	1.78	2.08
exhaust dia., in.....	1.36	1.50	1.50	1.60
lifters.....	mech.	mech.	mech.	hyd.
Carburetion.....	1 x 1	1 x 2	1 x 4	1 x 4
make.....	Holley	B & B	Carter	Carter
barrel dia., in.....	1.69	1.44	1.44	1.44
secondary.....	—	—	1.56	1.56
Transmissions.....	3 sp. man. 3 sp. auto	3 sp. man. 3 sp. auto	4 sp. man. 3 sp. auto	4 sp. man. 3 sp. auto