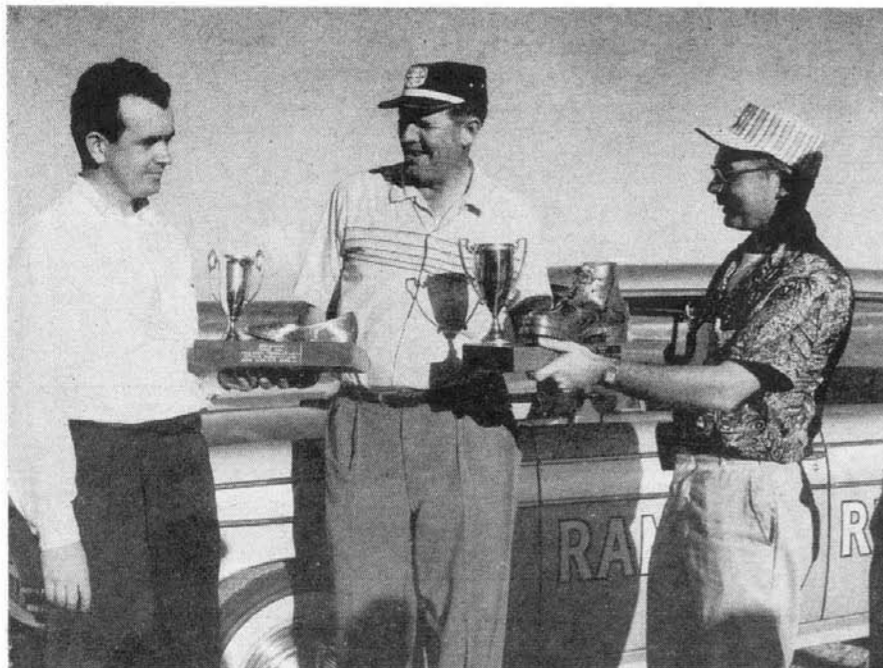


RAMBLER'S SUPER STOCK IS THE REBEL AND THE CARBURETOR VERSION CAN ACCELERATE FROM 0-60 IN WELL UNDER EIGHT SECONDS

Driver's Report— THE HOT STOCKS

BY KEN FERMOYLE



LEADFOOT TROPHY for top Rebel time is awarded by Bill France (center) to Fermoyle (right). Ramblers with electronic injection were not available for runs on Daytona sand.

NEVER before have so many automobiles worthy of the super-stock title been congregated in one place as at Daytona Beach in February of this year.

One of the most interesting was a new Rambler Rebel. This 255-hp job goes like no other Rambler of the past! And it appears to have solid handling qualities to match.

My first introduction to the Rebel was on the beach itself. American Motors had arranged with Nascar to hold a special "Press Writers Performance Derby" in which each writer was given a chance to run the Rebel thru a standing quarter-mile acceleration test.

When my turn came, I revved the engine to about 1000 rpm, popped the clutch and took off down the sand. I shifted to second at about 5200 rpm, went into third at 5000 and—17.87 seconds later—hit the timer at the end of the trap.

As it turned out, that time was good enough to win the "Leadfoot Award" and a trophy with a huge, plated 12EE boot mounted on it!

If the time of 17.87 for a quarter-mile sounds slow, just remember it was made on sand, not pavement. Running on asphalt or concrete would cut something like three or four seconds from the time.

I drove the same Rebel more extensively next morning. Allowing for the five per cent error fifth wheel checks had uncovered earlier, I was able to turn 0-60 in less than eight seconds.

With practice I'm sure the average of 7.3 which American Motors engineers reported they got in tests could be reached easily. Like almost everyone else in the Performance Derby, I had a little trouble throwing a fast first-to-second gear shift.

This particular Rebel had the big 327-cubic-inch V-8, but without Bendix electronic fuel injection. (A strike in American Motors' Kenosha plant was one factor in preventing an injection Rebel from making Speed Week.)

It had a manual-with-overdrive transmission and a 4.4-to-1 rear axle ratio. Like all future Rebels, it had Gabriel Adjustomatic shocks, heavier-than-normal springs and a sway bar at front.

It handled well, taking tight right or left curves with ease and a minimum of body roll. This Rebel, no price set yet, should be the answer for those who liked everything about Ramblers but the lack of performance.

There were a lot of Fords at Daytona with the supercharged 300-hp engine. I wangled a short drive behind the wheel of a new T-Bird so equipped.

There was no opportunity to calibrate the speedo, but it churned from 0 to an indicated 60 mph in times ranging from 7.5 to 8 seconds! Mid-range performance was outstanding. Flooring the accelerator at 50 brought a solid belt in the back and the needle swung to 80 in times paralleling the 0-60 times.

There were a number of 1957 Furies in town, but only one with stick-shift, as far as I could find. It was noticeably faster than the TorqueFlite model (see road test on pages 22-23).

Judging from runs thru the measured mile course, it was about 10 miles faster in top speed and nearly 10 per cent quicker from 0-60 mph. From a standing start, it took an average of 8.6 seconds to reach 60 mph.

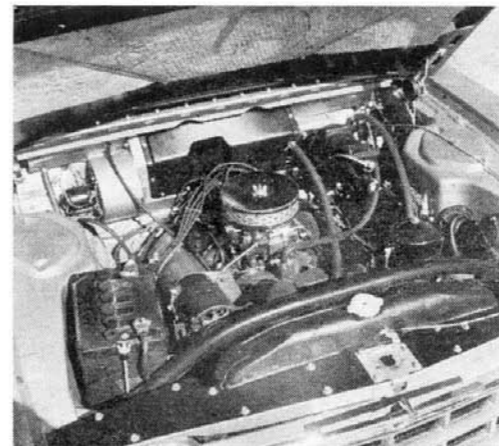
Like the TorqueFlite model, the stick-shift Fury doesn't really start moving until you reach 40 or 45 mph, however. It's from there on up that the hot cam and twin four-barrel carburetors really begin to count.

One minor complaint about all Fury models is that they are lacking in instrumentation. This type of car definitely should have a real, honest-to-goodness oil pressure gage. A tachometer would be a boon to performance fans, particularly on stick-shift models. The tach isn't so important with automatic transmission, but would take some of the seat-of-the-pants guesswork out of hand shifting.

I enjoyed a short session behind the wheel of Pontiac with the 317-hp, three two-barrel carburetor engine.

It was a simple matter to crack nine seconds from 0 to 60 and the average of several runs worked out to about 8.5 seconds.

I say *about*, because an allowance was made for average error as uncovered in checks on several 1957 Pontiacs earlier. There might have been a slight difference in speedometer accuracy of this one. •

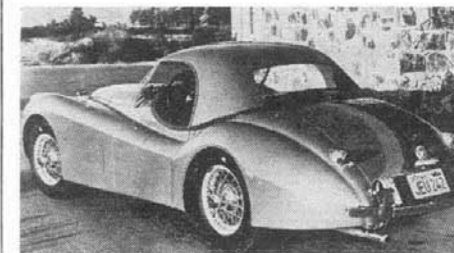


REBEL ENGINE with carburetor setup is standard, with the fuel injection unit optional when production gets under way.

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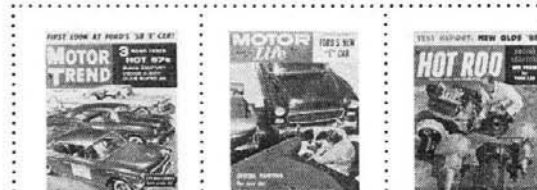
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