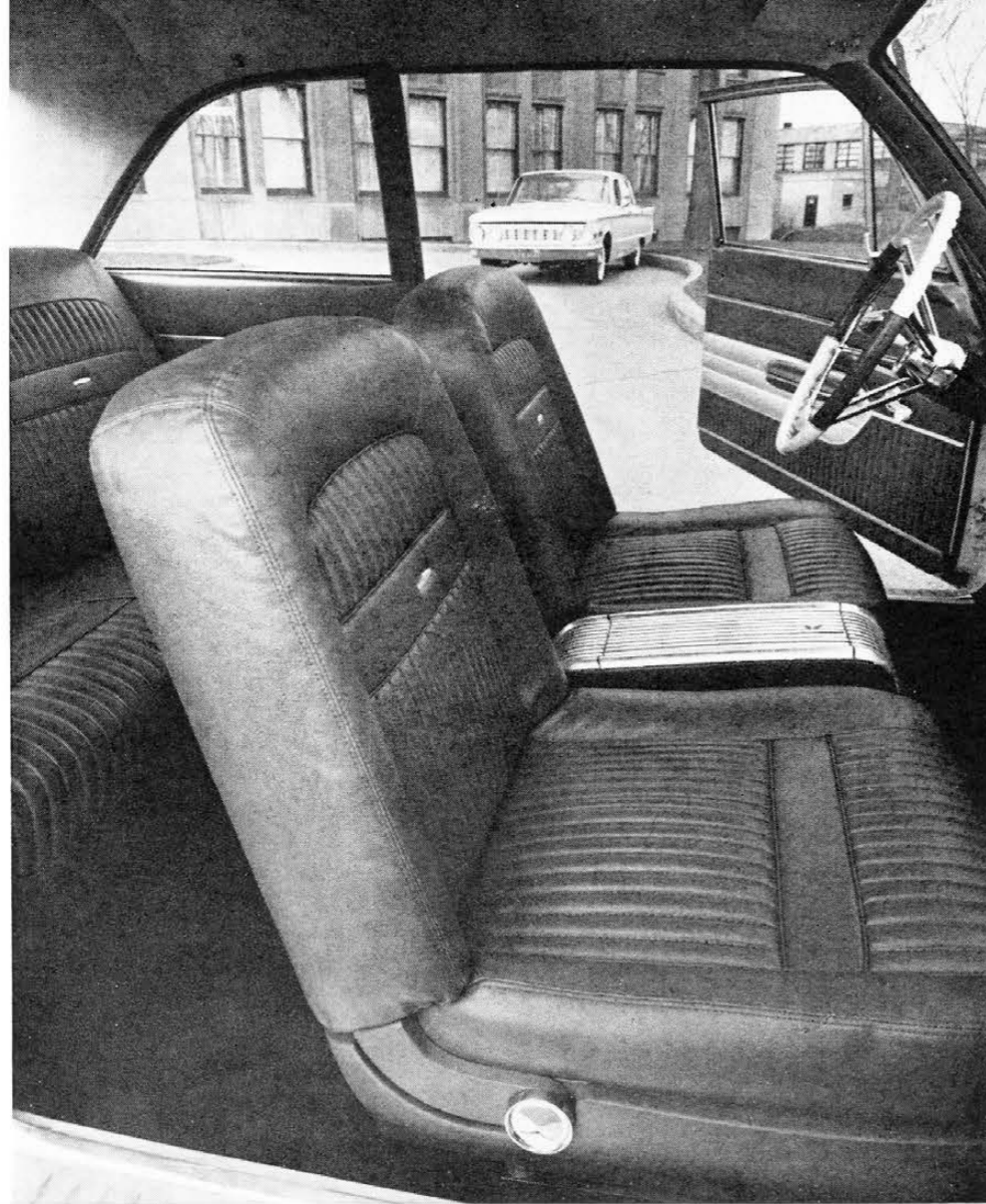
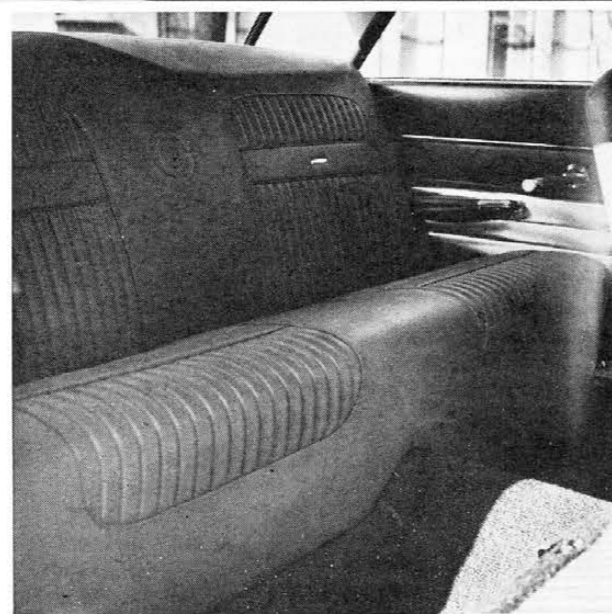
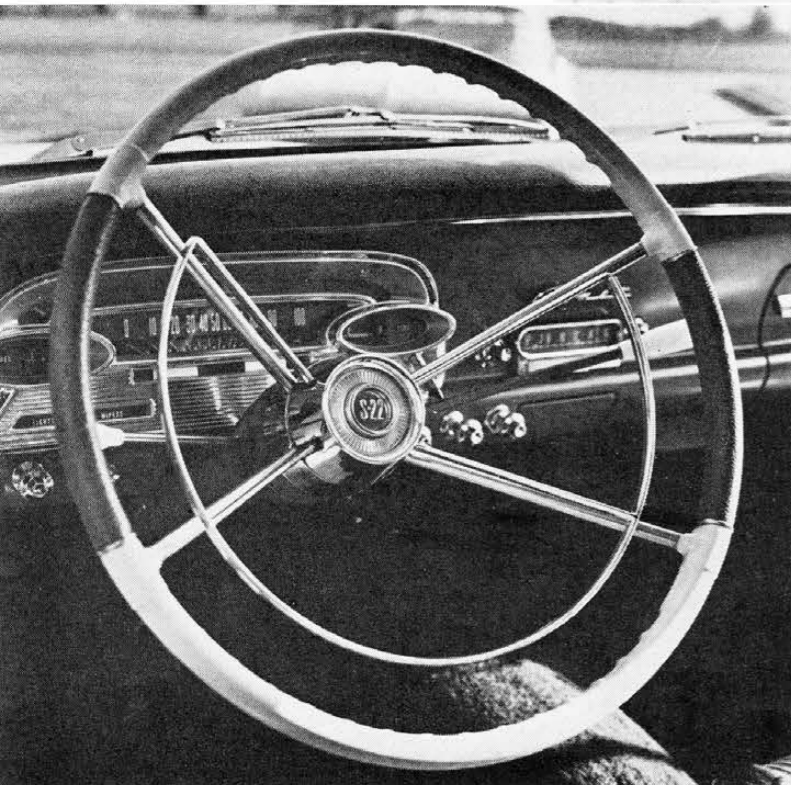




The Comet S-22 insignia (above) now identifies new version of the popular compact that has as its principal feature a semi-bucket-seat interior, with a T-Bird-style console dividing the seats.



Steering wheel has a sports-car flavor, with vinyl hand grips. The Comet dash is unchanged in the new S-22 version.



The rear seat of the S-22 remains the bench type, but pleats have been employed to provide a semi-bucket effect. Special carpeting and side panel trim are used.

THE NEW COMET S-22

A DRESSED-UP VERSION OF AN ECONOMY COMPACT CAR THAT HAS ALWAYS OFFERED A LITTLE MORE IN LUXURY

ONE OF THE LATEST of the compact cars to appear in a slightly sportier bucket-seat version is the Comet. Its glamour model is called the S-22, the designation having been arrived at for no known reason. While this has no direct bearing on the car itself, it nonetheless somehow sounds fitting.

The S-22 is based on, of course, basic Comet components. There are no alterations in the power train or running gear. The same options offered at extra cost on the standard Comets are optional on the S-22. The most important of these, obviously, are the choice between an automatic and a manual transmission and a selection of two six-cylinder, in-line engines, one of 144 cubic inches rated at 85 hp, and the other of 170 cubic inches rated at 101.

The Comet S-22, as are the regular-line Comets, is identical in most respects to the corresponding Falcon Futura, and standard Falcons. When the Comet was first introduced a little more than a year ago, this similarity was regarded as an almost fatal handicap, particularly with the Comet pegged at a slightly higher price. To give credit where credit is due, however, this has bothered the Comet least of all, and the car unquestionably is one of the great successes in the compact field. The little extra it has to offer over the Falcon is very obviously what several hundred thousand car buyers want.

Among the new compact cars at least, the Comet may be generally regarded as the pioneer luxury compact. And this is what sets it apart from the Falcon — with the S-22 being a further step in that direction. The Comet differs from the Falcon physically in only two major respects: it is a bigger car, about 14 inches longer overall on a four-inch-longer wheelbase; and it is fitted out with more detail touches of luxury — a little more chrome, more trim and similar deluxe touches. From a driving standpoint, the Comet rides a little smoother, gets a couple less miles per gallon of gas, has slightly slower performance — and that's about all. The advantages against the disadvantages of buying a Comet versus a Falcon are easily weighed. It's the old story of a little more luxury as opposed to strictly functional considerations.

In reporting upon the S-22, more to the point are the differences it has from the standard Comets. The front bench seats have been replaced by the semi-bucket type, which have been contoured by some four inches of foam padding. While this detracts from the carrying capacity of the car, it does add a good degree of individual comfort. Between these separated seats is a steel console that has a hinged cover which opens to a small



package compartment. The influence here is, of course, the Ford Thunderbird.

The rear seat remains the bench type which uses a pleating effect to simulate the bucket idea. The carpeting and upholstery are special for the S-22. Similar restyling has been used on the door panels, armrests and steering wheel, which now adopts the sports-car theme by vinyl-covered grips.

The exterior alterations, aside from appropriate identification symbols, have been limited to chrome trim, disc wheel covers and white sidewall tires as standard equipment. One other refinement, not on the surface, is the use of some 50 pounds of additional sound-deadening material, which will further the quiet luxury feel of the car.

The photo above shows the car on the stand at the recent New York auto show, the occasion for its initial appearance. The Comet S-22 comes only as a two-door and the price, which had not been reported at the time this is written, probably will be about \$250 over the price of a comparable standard Comet — and very likely less than \$100 more than the Falcon Futura.

Since the Comet car buyer in the past apparently has been the kind of individual willing to pay a little more for a little more, it could very well follow that the Comet S-22 will enjoy a degree of success far greater than anyone expects. /MT