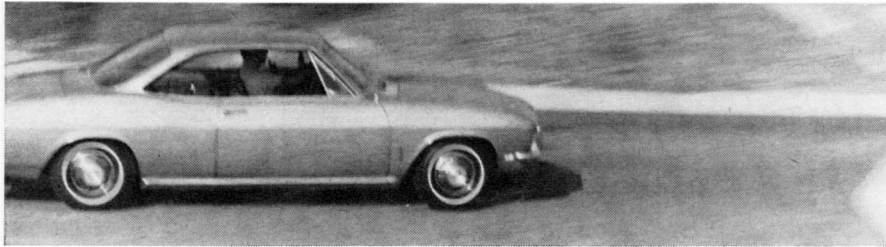


continued

RE-TESTING A SLOW CORVAIR



CORVAIR RETEST

GREAT ARMIES of Corvair owners wrote in after *CAR LIFE* road tested a 1968 Monza (January, 1968, page 40). While most readers felt our report was equitable and well enough done (we were generally pleased with everything about the car except its lack of power, and even this, we felt, wasn't a serious objection), all writers took us to task about the acceleration figures we'd gotten.

As the first few such letters reached our desk, we thought, "Well, it's the wounded pride of the misunderstood—the wishful thinkers." But then more and more comments kept rolling in saying the same thing, some with ir-

refutable evidence that our test Corvair (or driver) should have gotten *much* better acceleration times.

A reader in Whittier, Calif., representatively wrote: "I compared your recent test to the one you did on the 1964 Corvair with a 110-bhp engine. . . . This car had 30 bhp less . . . but was considerably faster in acceleration, while the top speed was the same."

As this wave of letters began to crest, we became convinced that perhaps we hadn't given the 1968 Monza its proper due. We called the local Chevrolet zone office and asked whether we could have the same Monza back for retesting. We wanted to recheck our figures and re-evaluate the car's overall performance so we could

report back here in *ACTION LINE*.

Unfortunately, that particular car was no longer available, apparently having suffered some form of congenital smog device breakdown that it must latently have had when we drove it. But the Chevy boys promised us an identical car with precisely the same equipment—140-bhp engine, four-speed manual transmission with the same gear ratios, same 3.55:1 differential, handling package, and exactly the same convenience options. This car was *carefully* checked out to make absolutely sure it was in peak running condition.

Engineering Editor Jon McKibben, who put our first test Corvair through its paces, applied his driving touch to this second version. (Jon drove for the Golden Commandos team when he worked at Chrysler Engineering in Detroit, so he's no novice at getting the most from a car.)

Sure enough, the second Corvair proved much faster and also more driveable generally than the original test car. Jon cut quarter-mile times by nearly two seconds, added just under 10 mph to trap times, and shaved 4.2 sec. off 0-60 mph. Clearly, big things were wrong with our first test Corvair Monza. ■

