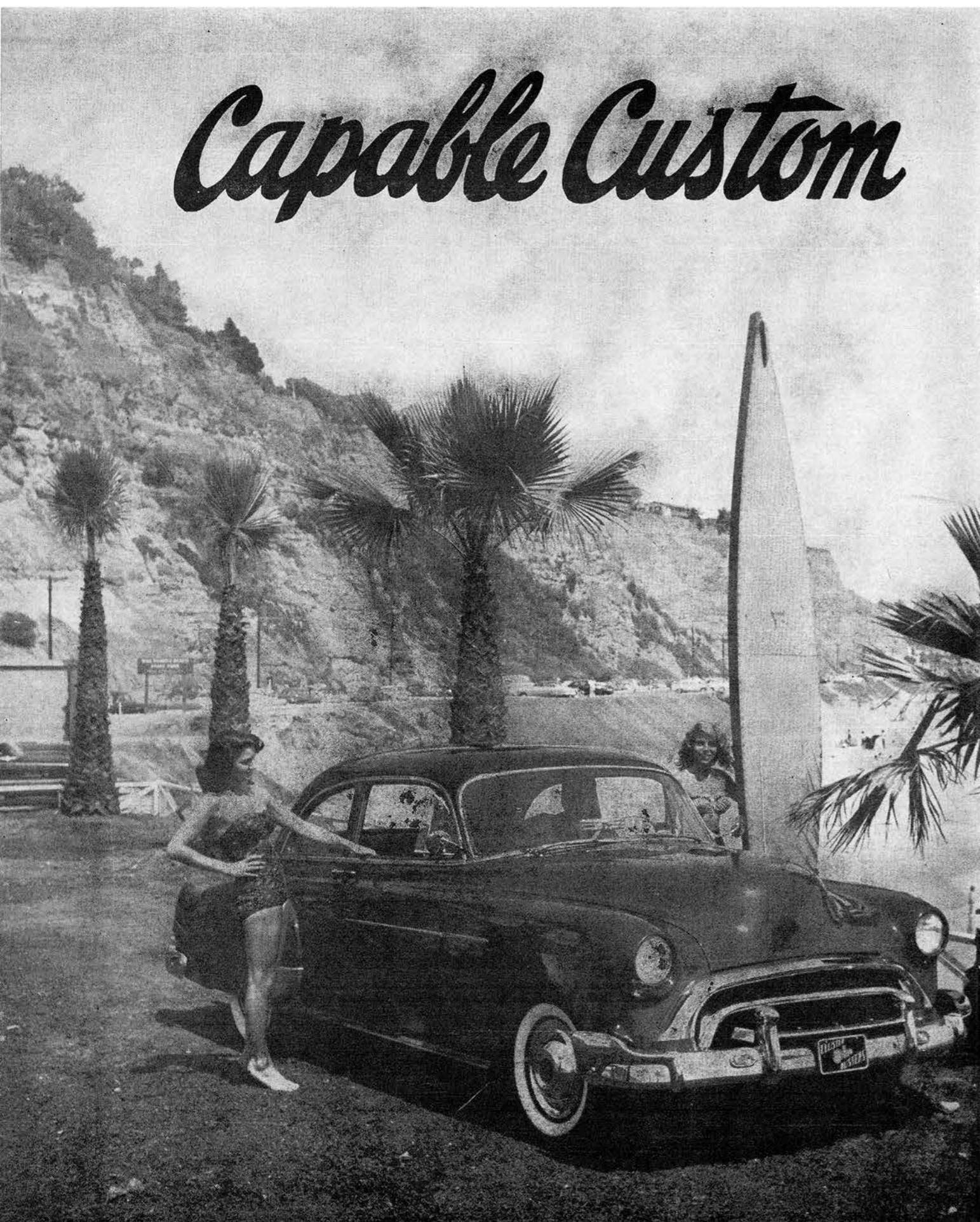


Capable Custom



JIM LEAVITT, with the help of his wife, has succeeded in producing one of the cleanest customs we have seen. Foreman in the body shop of the Redmond, Washington Pontiac dealer, Jim had access to and knowledge of many GM parts that could be adapted to his Chevy.

Beginning at the beginning, the front bumper, Jim spent three years of spare time hours before he was satisfied with the car. A family project, the proposed changes and alterations were discussed in many conferences before actual work was begun. The one proposal that caused the greatest amount of discussion was, "Shall we chop the top?"

Mrs. Leavitt tells me they spent weeks in reaching a decision, and when they finally decided to "chop," Jim spent more weeks in the planning before he was ready to start cutting. When the great day rolled around, Jim had all the upholstery out, the top "charted" and with hacksaw in hand was all ready to begin the first cut, when, through the kitchen window came a scream from Mrs. L. "No Jim, No, let's talk some more." As you can see in these illustrations the top remained in its stock form. They decided that as long as they were going to express practicability in design of their custom they would be defeating their purpose if they made either the entrance or exit from the automobile difficult.

Now let us also start at the front bumper and working toward the rear explain all the improvements Jim has added to this '50 Chevrolet Styline Tudor.

The front bumper is stock with the exception that the direction and parking lights have been mounted in it.

Top grill bar is from a '50 Olds 98 and needed only slight alterations in the center and at both ends. Hand formed sections molded onto the gravel pan form the base at either end of the top bar. The center bar is stock '51 Olds 88. The lower section was hand formed, chromed and added to the rear of the center guard. All grille components are bolted in place.

Hood has been de-chromed and smoothed. The headlights have been frenched and by using '51 Ford rims the beams are adjustable from the front. The sealed units however, must be installed from inside the fender. The chrome strip on the door is stock but the strip on the fender is from the rear door of a four door '52 Chevrolet.

Mrs. L. was all for the one piece windshield so Jim replaced the stock two-piece model with one from a '50 Olds. The gravel guard at the front of the rear fender is '52 Chev. The rear half of the fender is '50 Cadillac and has been shaped nicely over the rear bumper tips. Enough clearance was left between the two so that use of a bumper jack will not spring the bumper tips high enough to contact the fender.

The rear deck lid has been smoothed and a solenoid operated from the dash panel trips the latch. An emergency cable is also attached to the latch in case of electrical failure.

The interior was done almost entirely by Mrs. L. and she used DuPont Leatherette for the seats and all the panels. The seats and side panels are done in black and eggshell white while the top head liner sections are solid red.

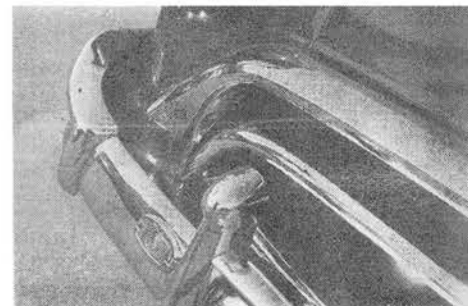
The only additions to the dash panel are: one Studebaker rear view mirror and an electric tachometer. The engine has been subjected to minor alterations only.

The head has been milled .125, a 3/4 cam installed and a Fenton dual manifold with two Rochester carburetors added.

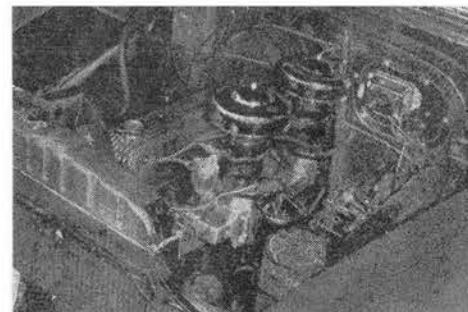
All accessories have been chromed and a buffed aluminum rocker cover gives the engine that professional touch.

For an engine that has had only slight modification improvements it is remarkable that the car consistently turns a quarter mile in excess of 80 mph. This is no doubt due to the fact that Jim is almost fanatical in his attempts to keep the engine operating at its very peak at all times.

Jim, with the help of Mrs. Leavitt, has done every bit of the work on this car himself and at present is in the process of constructing a roadster type sports car. Soon as it is completed Hop Up will present the full story and we feel that Jim's roadster and his story on "How to do it" will be interesting and beneficial to everyone planning a sports car.



SPECIAL gravel pan was built to fit the new grille bar. Note the new location of turn indicators



ENGINE with conservative modifications regularly beats the 80 mph mark in quarter mile drags



INTERIOR was another home job done with the capable assistance of Jim's helpful wife

CADILLAC rear fenders were altered to fit contour of bumper. Deck lid was smoothed and filled

