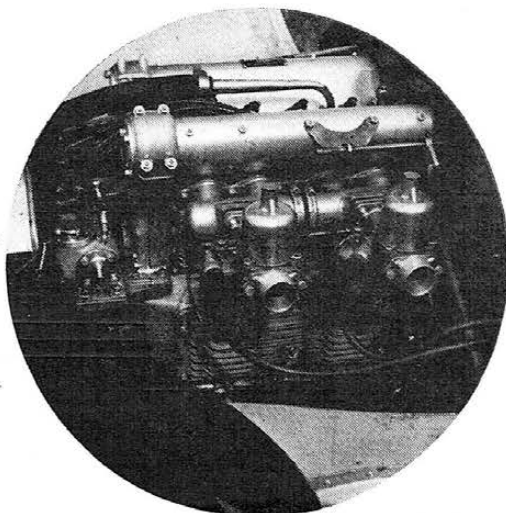


OFFY CHALLENGES THE LIGHTWEIGHTS

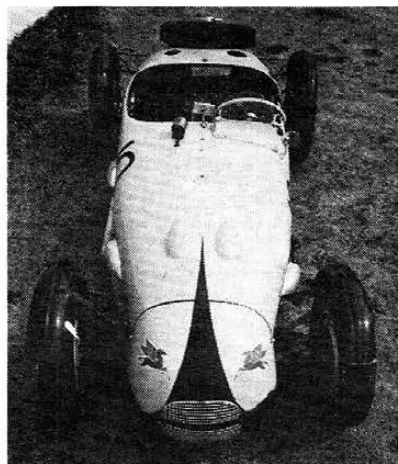
*What America needs
in sports car
road racing is
a good engine
with fewer
cubic inches.
Maybe this is it*



WHILE stock American engines have been highly successful in the unlimited categories of sports car racing, nothing made in Detroit is suitable for the very competitive under 1500 cc classes. Thus, in recent months, more and more attention has been focused upon the Myer-Drake Offenhauser. As a matter of fact, in the near future the firm will market a 91 cubic inch version designed to challenge the lightweight imports.

An experimental Offy of such dimensions has been running on road circuits since October 1953. With it, George Beavis of Los Angeles has been victorious at Torrey Pines, Palm Springs and Willow Springs. He estimates the Offy, in his 1300-pound special, has turned 122 mph.

Aluminum body of Beavis Offy is mounted on tubular steel frame which the builder thinks is the best.

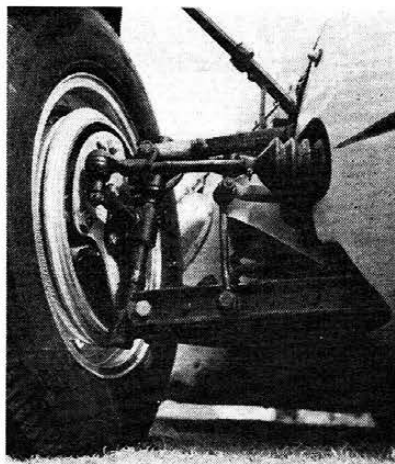


Beavis feels that 200 pounds will have to be cut from the total weight before the car can match formidable opponents, such as the Italian Osca. On the basis of his experience, this reduction must come in the running gear through lighter brakes, suspension and axle. This means costly engineering from the ground up, with original castings.

As it now stands, the Beavis Offy, of 112 hp, is mounted on an 86-inch wheelbase with a 48-inch tread. The frame is steel tubing which carries the aluminum body on MG TD suspension in front and Morris Minor torsion bars in the rear.

The transmission is MG TC, coupled to the Offy by a special adapter. Brakes are 1950 DeSoto. •

Front suspension is MG TD, with brakes adapted from 1950 DeSoto. Car handles well on road race course.



MERCURY ROAD TEST

(Continued from page 29)

come with smoothness not present in earlier versions of the gearbox.

The 198 hp engine, incidentally, is standard in the Montclair only with Merc-O-Matic. For those who choose conventional or overdrive, the 188 hp "second" Mercury engine is standard.

BIGGER, BETTER BRAKES

The Montclair, along with the rest of the 1955 Mercury models, have 30 square inches more of brake lining area. The increase is reflected in the shorter stopping distances recorded in "panic" stop tests from 30, 45 and 60 mph. It's nice to know that greater power and speed have been accompanied by attention to such vital safety points.

From behind the wheel, the Montclair, with a shorter hood contour than most cars, is an easy and pleasant car for either long or short trips. Mercury, unfortunately, has not chosen to cover the highly polished dash with non-reflecting material, although hot spots did not seem to be present. At night, the instrument cluster light reflects from the upper left corner of the wrap-around windshield and is distracting.

Interior of the Montclair is both colorful and highly functional. The white vinyl upholstery is susceptible to soiling and buyers who make this choice should consult their dealers promptly for advice on how to keep it in original condition. Elsewhere, the appointments are handsome, durable and modern.

To put it briefly, the Montclair is a top choice for a car buyer in any price field. Its range is not far above the deluxe versions of the low-priced class, yet has the luxury looks and features to make it attractive to those who consider only the costly models.

It has what most drivers want: smartness in its fresh styling, grade A performance, the dependability of tested design, universal service facilities, and what surely will become one of the brightest names in American cars. •

SPECIFICATIONS

TEST CAR: 1955 Mercury Montclair hardtop.

ENGINE: ohv V-8. Bore 3.75 inches, stroke 3.30. Displacement 292 cubic inches. Compression ratio 8.5-to-1. Bhp 198 at 4400 rpm. Torque 286 ft. lbs. at 2500 rpm. Crankcase capacity (with filter) 6 quarts. Fuel tank capacity 18 gallons. Cooling system capacity (with heater) 20 quarts. Electrical system 6 volts.

TRANSMISSION: Merc-O-Matic torque converter with planetary gears. Rear axle ratio 3.15 (3.73 with conventional and 4.09 with overdrive).

OVERALL DIMENSIONS: Wheelbase 119 inches. Tread 58 inches front, 59 inches rear. Length 206.3, width 76.4, height 58.6. Dry weight 3480 lbs. Turning circle 42.37 feet. Tire size 7.10 x 15 tubeless.

PRICES: Hardtop coupe \$2631, Sun Valley glass-top \$2711, convertible \$2712. Merc-O-Matic \$189. Power steering \$100. Power brakes \$38. Radio \$90. Electric window lifts \$95.