

SUPERCHARGED

DRIVER'S REPORT

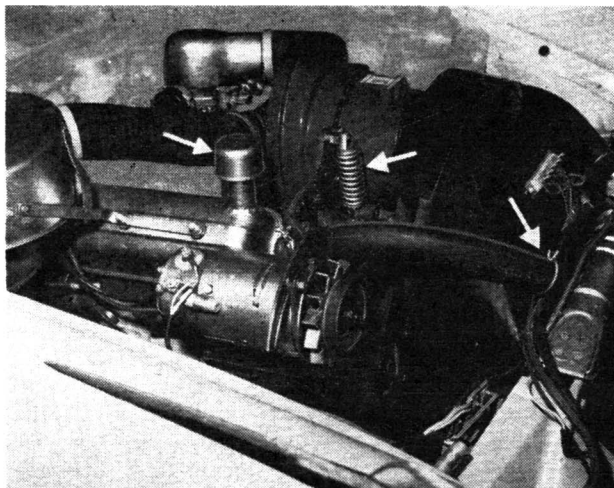
EARLIER drivers' reports in *MOTOR Life* provided evidence that Studebaker's Speedster lives up to its name as an outstanding performer. However, the recent installation of a McCulloch supercharger on a conventional-shift model by John McKusick, of STU-V, in Los Angeles, suggested such interesting possibilities that arrangements were made to take the car out onto the road for a check of the results.

Using only a stop watch and the Speedster's own tachometer and speedometer (which previous tests have shown to be exceptionally accurate), some acceleration times were recorded.

The first effort was aimed at 30 mph from a standing start. The instant the clutch was released and the throttle depressed, however, the speedometer gave a flash reading of more than 30 mph, due to the rear tires breaking loose from the enormous thrust. We also were wary of fish-tailing from dead-stop in a full-on try. So, after three attempts, which were brutal on the rear tires, it was decided to shoot at a 0-45 mph time.

Taking it a bit easier on the throttle and clutch, wheel-bite was preserved and the Speedster soared to the higher mark in 3.5 seconds flat!

Arrows point out special modifications to handle blower under Speedster's low hood: from left, new oil filler neck, bracket for blower, and right, new water hose to radiator.



SPEEDSTER

BY DEAN MOON

In comparison with the previous report on a non-supercharged Speedster, which recorded a time of 3.65 seconds 0-30 mph, this was one-tenth of a second less to go 15 mph faster. Other comparisons: 0-60 mph with the stock Speedster was 11.5 seconds, while the supercharged Speedster registered 7.7 seconds; standing quarter-mile stock was 20 seconds to 80 mph, supercharger did it in 16.4 to 86 mph; 50-80 mph, stock 12.6 seconds, blown 7.0 flat (in second gear OD).

An experiment to see how the supercharged Stude Speedster operated without bucking or lurching was next. In top gear the car moved along smoothly at eight mph—the quality unchanged from that of the stocker. In all tests, the electric tach indicated the most effective range for the supercharged engine was from 1500 to 5200 rpm; above this point a minor case of valve-float set in.

Engine compartment of the '55 Studebaker is compact, and addition of the blower required the engineering of a special kit by STU-V (price \$390), which includes brackets allowing for clearance around power steering and other linkages. Installation instructions are provided for the advanced layman mechanic, although shop facilities are necessary to set up the arrangement. •

View from opposite side shows: foreground, power steering moved slightly to accommodate power brake unit, rear. Drivers felt automatic transmission would be better.

