

Bill Miller's Special inches, inches, everywhere...

THE road to building a "back-yard" special can often be a long and bumpy one, and, like as not, a good many shining ideals about what the car could and should be must needs be dropped along the wayside.

Usually the concept of a sports car includes the qualities of lightness and agility. In the case of the special shown on this page, however, Builder Bill Miller of Los Angeles was not primarily interested in competition; he wanted a solid, handsome "boulevard" sports car, distinctive in styling and with tremendous acceleration over a wide speed range. His main source of components—a 1938 7-passenger Packard limousine—would not have seemed overly promising to many an enthusiast, but when you

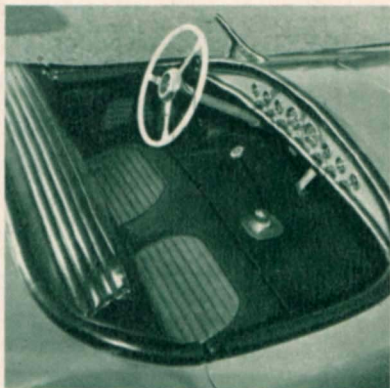
set out to build your own car on any kind of budget, you commence with what you have.

The chassis was shortened (by 39 in.) to 105 in., but the original tread (about 60 in.) was retained. Modifications to the enormous 476 cu. in., V-12 engine, which originally was rated at 175 bhp, included a .010 in. over-bore and a special manifold incorporating three Stromberg carburetors. Although Mr. Miller has not tested the engine on a dynamometer, output should be considerably improved.

To garb the massive chassis and engine, Bohman & Sons, of Pasadena, formed an all-steel body using a suggestion of Packard

Clipper around the headlights and a bit of the original limousine at the back portion of the rear fenders. Bumpers are '36 Cadillac V-16, with a gentle scoop taken out in front to conform to the grille oval. Behind the grille is fitted a specially constructed radiator to cope with the cooling problem of a large engine in a small space. Since this was to be a fair-weather sports car, no attempt at weather protection was made, but extra care was lavished on a spacious, beautiful interior, with an orderly bank of Stewart Warner instruments.

One year and \$6500 were expended on this 4000 lb. special (windshield still to come), but already Mr. Miller is looking for greener fields.



Left: the cockpit contains a large, sofa-seat and Stewart Warner instruments. Right: power is supplied by a '38 Packard V-12 with 3 Stromberg carburetors. Below: the all-steel body by Bohman & Sons, is mounted on a 105-in. wheelbase.

