very sincerely yours:

TARTING on page 28 is the story of what might well be the last of the fabulous Pebble Beach races. For the first time in seven years that classic of all American races has had a fatality, which, combined with another serious accident that occurred during practice, could well blow the whistle on future Pebble Beach events.

We can make no diagnosis of what actually caused the fatal accident, but one thing is certain — the machinery in the main event for modified cars over 1500 cc was just too fierce for the tight, twisting, tree-lined course. Lap after lap the course record was shattered in a race that was just too fast for conditions. A case in point was the ex-Fangio 3.4 Ferrari driven by Phil Hill to second place. This car, which had beaten some of the world's finest competition machines in the grueling 12 hour endurance race at Sebring, was handily whipped by a smaller, older 750 Monza Ferrari. Further, the rear end had to be weighted down with a 100-pound chunk of lead to keep the rear wheels on the course. The problem certainly wasn't in the cockpit. Few people are as familiar with either the course or the Ferrari product as Hill. It was a case of too much car for the amount of road involved. The car in which Ernie McAfee was killed was even bigger and more powerful.

There is only one answer – a limit on displacement. At the only similar course in the U.S., Pennsylvania's Brynfan Tyddyn, such a limit has been in effect since the outset of that event. Cars here are restricted to two liters, period. No ifs, ands or buts – 121 cubic inches, no more. Two-liter machinery is not exactly slow, but at least the amateur driver, out for kicks and cups, doesn't sit on the grid with shaking hand and clammy brow wondering if he's going to live through it; he doesn't have to feather-foot all the way around the course using half-throttle to keep the car from looping. Tight, twisting courses are fine for small machinery but not for the heavyweight, fierce stuff that showed for Pebble Beach. These are for airports. It ceases to be fun when you're scared, and too many people were scared at Pebble Beach. If a limit is good enough for professionals, it's good enough for amateurs.

Speaking of fierce machinery, you'll find, if you turn to page 40, a driver's report on the D-type Jaguar. We're firm believers in the complete test and our technical staff go all out to provide same. However, in the case of competition machinery of the caliber of the D-Jaguar, we feel that the ordinary test, applied to dual purpose cars, is just plain not valid. Such cars are designed for competition on race courses or roads set up for racing only, and a report on a competition car outside of its milieu is unfair to the car, very likely inaccurate and above all, dangerous to others. Hence, the driver's report.

Coming up next issue are several stories you won't want to miss. First up is the car which augurs to be a scourge in Western racing, Tom Carstens' new HWM-Chev, a going bomb that may well repeat the performance of Tom's fabulous black Cad-Allard, a car that swept the Coast competition for two years running. Another boomer is Bill Murphy's murderous Buick Kurtis. This one, newly equipped with Hilborn fuel injection, just picked up another 61 horsepower and Russ Kelly tells you how. As a bonus, C. O. LaTourette has done a cutaway that lays bare the bones. Anybody wondering what that crusty genius Alfred Neubauer is doing these days? Believe us, he hasn't quit building drivers. Si Bourgin has the latest dope on the man who has led the Mercedes team for over a quarter of a century. Also coming up are the first real tests of the two Swedish newcomers, the SAAB 93 and the fantastic new Volvo. What the hell, read the whole book - you'll probably like it. We had a ball putting it together. - john christy

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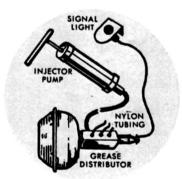
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