

The Real Cost of a Sports Car

IT ISN'T the initial cost or even the upkeep that flattens the bank account of the sports car owner. Instead it's those hidden costs. We offer in evidence the poignant record of our office accountant, a systematic and orderly type.

The first entry was written in a firm, sure hand.

1956 . . .

May 1 - 8	— Expenses for old auto while shopping the foreign-car lots	\$ 2.91
May 8	— Flowers for wife to introduce subject of bargain TC just found	2.50
May 8	— Evening at O'Brien's bar after argument	4.75
May 9	— Dinner for wife to lure her by car lot to see TC	7.75
May 10	— New hairdo for wife after demonstration ride	4.00
May 10	— Bought TC	1,100.00
May 11	— Bought babushka for wife so hair wouldn't blow65
May 12	— After dramatic scene, traded babushka on special hardtop	75.00
May 13	— Friend who claimed to be expert demonstrated speed shifting. New third gear	43.65
May 14	— Wife bought sweater to match car	25.00
May 18	— Raced with TD on way to work. Speeding citation..	25.00
May 19	— Wife bought slacks to go with sweater of May 14	19.95
May 20	— Had car modified to Mark II specs. Raced TD on way to work. Speeding citation and modifications	245.00
May 21	— Neighbor's five-year-old son drew crayon picture on upholstery. Leather cleaner	1.50
May 22	— Settled out of court for clobbering neighbor's son ..	50.00
May 23	— Wife bought shoes to go with slacks which went with sweater that matched car	16.95
May 24	— Expert friend showed me how to adjust carburetor. Replace four burned pistons	52.95
May 25	— Evening at O'Brien's after argument resulting from returning handbag wife had bought to go with shoes which went with slacks, etc.	4.75
May 26	— Raced with TF1500 on way to work. Speeding citation	25.00
May 27	— GB plates, Badge bar, badge starter set	11.75
May 30	— Had car modified to TF1500 specs.	175.00
June 10	— Added up all figures listed above. Told wife she'd have to economize. Evening at O'Brien's	4.75
June 15	— Expert friend demonstrated proper cornering technique. Repair right front fender	19.00
June 19	— Party to placate expert friend and wife after heated discussion. Gin, vermouth, canapes	9.10
July 1	— Taught wife to drive TC. New clutch	39.00
July 2	— Gave wife second lesson. Evening at O'Brien's	4.75
August 1	— Wife raced Porsche Super. Speeding citation	25.00
August 2	— TC expenses while shopping the foreign-car lots for Porsche Super	1.75
August 9	— Porsche Super, used, good condition	2,975.00

Simple addition proves that the price of a good TC, used, is somewhat more than the guidebooks tell you. Our accountant has added some gray hair, some lines to his forehead. The bonding company has sent us three warning notes about his credit standing. We sent the bonding company a short, curt reply in return. Their own accountant owns a Porsche Super and we've heard his wife tried to go against a Mercedes 300 SL.

Who bonds the bonders?

—george laws

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horsepower are going to be the critical factors determining the amount of boost pressure we can safely pull out of the McCulloch. As mentioned earlier, the boost here is controlled by a solenoid regulator mechanism. The pressure at which this regulates is adjustable by a screw under the medalion plate on top of the blower. This little screw has been the downfall of more than one exuberant enthusiast! I've heard of people turning it down the limit and reading more than seven lb. pressure on good-sized engines. Many have burned up their drives pulling only 5½ lbs. on big OHV engines. After all, to pump enough air to produce 350 hp at five lbs. pressure would require 32,000 rpm impeller speed and over 27 hp on the McCulloch. It would burn it up in about one minute flat.

Units from the factory are pre-adjusted for 4½ to five lbs. pressure, depending on engine size. We can safely pull a bit more than this under certain conditions. Here are my recommendations: First, figure that your true horsepower as installed with the McCulloch blower is roughly 10 percent above the advertised rating of the engine in question. If this horsepower figure falls below 150 you can safely adjust the screw regulator to hold as high as 6½ lbs. boost. If the calculated power falls in the 150-210 hp range, I'm sure you could stretch a point and adjust for 5½-6 lbs. with a decent safety margin. Above the 210 hp point you should either regulate down to the 4-4½ lbs. range or use the Heavy-Duty drive. With the H-D drive you can safely pull five lbs. boost up to a calculated hp figure of at least 300, and 5½ lbs. up to maybe 275. In the higher air flow ranges the power requirement of the impeller rises at such a rapid rate that the McCulloch design is all but useless for anything over 350 hp.

And here's another little-understood point that has clobbered more than one McCulloch under a lead foot: Since the ratio spread on the variable pulley layout is limited to less than 1.7:1, the whole thing is going to be, in effect, a fixed-ratio drive above the "maximum rpm" point of around 5000 rpm. That is, the factory selects pulley sizes to give rated boost in the 3000-5000 rpm range; if the engine is wound above 5000 the impeller speed will increase in direct proportion . . . and the pressure output will shoot up as the square of rpm. This will kill your McCulloch as quick as anything. I'd be afraid of anything over maybe 5300 rpm crank speed with a standard McCulloch setup.

Next month we'll take up the Roots blowers.

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