

the first turn in splendid isolation.

"I made a boulevard stop at the first turn," Pollack told me later. "There was more acceleration than I could handle. The engine was supernatural."

But at the first turn Pollack learned the horrible truth. He went into the turn way in the lead, got set, then the rear end broke into its own version of the corner. There was no way the car could be handled except to slow it down for the corners. This was the story of the race. The HWM could take any Ferrari in the race acceleration and match it on usable top speed, but it couldn't stay in the corners with it. On the third turn of the first lap, Phil Hill passed the HWM. By the end of the race, Pollack was one lap behind. He finally placed sixth overall, third in the crowded C Class. His final gesture was a good one. He deliberately slowed down so he would be coming out of the last turn with Phil Hill on Phil's last lap and his own penultimate lap. Once out of the turn he stood on the Chevy. It beat Phil's 3.5-liter Ferrari to the finish line.

Pollack's later thoughts are interesting. He loves the engine — he didn't use all the throttle at any time because there was just too much power. He loves the transmission — there's only 1000 rpm between second, third and fourth, thus giving him optional gears for difficult situations. He couldn't drive the rear end — it was too squirrely in corners. The rear end broke loose so quickly that there could not be normal drift set up on the corners. As Pollack phrased it, he couldn't go into the corners with the Ferraris without feeling "terribly busy." He calls the steering "fabulous." He loves the brakes, particularly the way they improve with heat rather than fade.

After the race, the cause of the slippery rear end, or at least a major part of it, was found on the teardown that is S.O.P. with Carstens' cars. The differential spider gears were a complete mess. One had frozen on the cross-shaft and disintegrated. The others locked up solidly. The way the unit was made was the only thing that kept the pieces from fouling the ring and pinion. At sometime during the final assembly the bronze thrust washers had been left off the spiders, complicating matters considerably. The end result was that the car behaved exactly as if it had a dirt-track solid-bar rear axle with all the oversteer characteristics this implies. A self-locking (and releasing) differential is one thing on a road course; a solid lock is quite another. With this fault discovered and a revamping of the rear spring rate, the car may well be on its way to complete recovery and a place alongside the famous Number 14 Alard and the midget. #

Safety Bulletin No. 2

Editor's Note:

Following the publication of our first safety bulletin on seat belts, we received the following letter. We feel that the information it contains is of the utmost importance to all of our readers. Ray Brown was the first manufacturer of automobile belts, and as such can be considered the top spokesman for the industry. We have answered his letter below.

As an officer and director of The Automobile Seat Belt Institute, I take exception to your Seat Belt Safety Bulletin which appears in the June issue, page 58. Paragraph 5 of your Safety Bulletin states, "On March 9 the Patrol announced the results of its first tests of seat belts that are available to the motoring public. The results were shocking in that out of more than 70 belts now being marketed only 13 passed the basic CAA test."

With your permission, I will correct this statement and clarify the actual situation.

On March 9, 1956 the California Highway Patrol issued a list of 12 manufacturers of 18 safety belts.

The two that you failed to list are: Star-Lite Mfg. Co. and San Joaquin Parachute Loft Co. whose names also appeared on the first published list. These 12 manufacturers, together with the very few that were rejected for one reason or another, submitted their seat belts units for testing to the California Highway Patrol prior to 15 January 1956.

There were upwards of 100 automobile safety belts submitted and waiting for testing at the agency between January 15 and the present date which are neither approved nor disapproved, simply because there was not sufficient time and manpower to conduct and rapidly process tests and reports.

The reputable manufacturers, the National Association, and the California Highway Patrol became cognizant of the fact that certain companies and individuals were using this initial list incorrectly and unfairly.

On March 20, 1956 the California Highway Patrol issued a Bulletin Ref. 3.87.19 which clarified the misinformation which had been circulated. Paragraph #1 of that Bulletin is as follows:

"Statements to the effect that all belts not on the first bulletin have been rejected are unfounded. The testing is being conducted on a continuing basis and supplemental bulletins will be issued as results become available on additional models. The standing of belts recently submitted will not be determined until the test results are available from the testing agency at the University of California."

Our Impact Saf-Tee Belt was designed and manufactured in 1951 and was the first and original safety belt ever produced and marketed specifically for automotive use.

It was submitted to the California Highway Patrol for testing on February 17th, 1956 and was passed and approved upon initial testing on May 7th, 1956.

Yours very truly,
Ray Brown
Ray Brown Automotive
Los Angeles, California

The deletion of the Star-Lite and San Joaquin belts was completely unintentional and was caused by the fact that they were by themselves on the second page of the CHP bulletin. The material for the story was from a personal interview with a Highway Patrol official given one of SCI's West Coast staff members and was, at the time of writing, accurate except for the two unintentional omissions. Since the first bulletin, several other belts have passed, including the Ray Brown Impact-Saf-Tee and Security belts. We regret the impression that all others than those listed failed, but felt that the phrases "first tests" and "acceptability will be announced" implied that the tests were continuous and not as yet completed. At the time of the interview, according to our information, 70 belts had been tested and all but the ones listed, together with the Star-Lite and San Joaquin belts, found wanting. We know and you know that there are some very inferior belts on the market, and that these are capable of killing our readers and the business of the reputable manufacturers. We are delighted to pass on the names of accepted belts as they come through from the CHP as a service to our readers and to the manufacturers. Nothing would make us happier than to see the name of every seat belt manufacturer on the approved list.—The Editors. #