

AUTOS ABROAD

THE NEW STAR from Stuttgart was not unexpected, but its portent was. Mercedes-Benz announced the new 230-SL sports roadster, which goes into production in May, as the replacement for the 190-SL. This had been anticipated, but the fact that the new model also eliminates the mighty 300-SL from production came as a completely unforeseen development.

First previews of the new bearer of the tri-pointed star, moreover, showed the new M-B to have a detachable hardtop. The companion 230-SL coupe has a similar, but non-removable, top.

A sohc 6-cyl. engine with Bosch fuel injection, derived from the 220 series powerplant, has a German DIN rating of 150 bhp at 5500 rpm—a conservative figure when compared with American rating methods. It is an oversquare design, with 3.23-in. bore and 2.86-in. stroke, for a displacement of 140.6 cu. in. Compression ratio is 9.3:1 and the torque peak (144.6 lb./ft.) occurs at 4200 rpm. This places it between the 190-SL, with 105 bhp, and the 215-bhp (DIN) 300-SL.

It is a slightly larger car than the



SIDESADDLE SEAT for second passenger is optional in new Mercedes-Benz.

smaller roadster it replaces, but wheelbase continues at 94.5 in. (same as both earlier cars). Track is wider at 58.5 in. and larger (than 190-SL) tires are used—185-14 in., European size. With a curb weight of 2849 lb., the 230-SL has a 19 lb./bhp weight factor. Full load weight of 3553 lb. is distributed 1749 lb. front, 1804 lb. rear.

The roadster's tourability has been improved, with a large luggage compartment for a car of this size. As the

roadster is designed for two persons, there is space behind the leather bucket seats in the passenger compartment for additional luggage or an optional single seat that is mounted crosswise. Fuel tank capacity is 17.1 gal., with 1.8 gal. in reserve.

A 4-speed manual transmission is controlled by a short, tunnel-mounted shift lever. Final drive is 3.75:1. Disc brakes are fitted to the front, drum brakes at the rear. ■

NEW ROADSTERS with hardtops in place are surveyed by M-B executive. The 230-SL also comes as a fixed-top coupe.

