

NEW CARS

1967 CHEVROLET

1967 BUICK

1967 PONTIAC

1967 OLDSMOBILE

1967 CADILLAC

1967 AMERICAN MOTORS

We covered the Ford, Chrysler and Mercury new-car scene last month. Here's the second half of the 1967 product engineering story: technical information on the General Motors and American Motors lines, plus photos of the new ones from Detroit.

CHEVROLET

The newest of the newer-than-new 1967 cars, the Camaro, is treated at length in our Road Research Report on page 28 (and somewhat hysterically by Our Man Smith in his SPORT column). The oldest of the 1967 cars is the Corvair, virtually unchanged from 1965 or 1966. The range of the Corvair's options has been noticeably narrowed, however, by dropping the sporty Corsa trim package and the two most powerful engine options. The highest horsepower rating available in '67 will be 110, which isn't enough to interest us. The Corvair, the rear-wheel drive Cadillacs, the Olds 98, and all American Motors 6-cylinder cars now share the ignominy of being the only American cars without disc brake options. Fortunately for the Corvair, it didn't need discs nearly as badly as the big GM products.

Chevrolet continues to offer the most diversified collection of cars of any automaker, with everything from the undernourished Corvair to the overwhelming Corvette. In between, the Chevy II, the Chevelle and the big Chevy remain virtually unchanged. Safety "pacifiers" are featured, the best of which is undoubtedly the Saginaw collapsible, energy-absorbing steering column, bought by all GM divisions and by Chrysler Corporation (Ford is the only manufacturer without this feature). We also welcome the dual master brake cylinders and front shoulder harness anchors on all the '67 GM cars, although few people will take advantage of the latter. Knobs and other small hardware do not appear to be as safely designed as Ford's and Chrysler's are, however.

In the performance area, the "SS" series are being emphasized, with the Chevy II's SS 327, the Camaro's SS 350, the Chevelle's SS 396 and the Impala's SS 427. The full-size Chevys have had their suspension and steering attended to, with a smoother ride and better handling claimed as a result. Mechanically, few changes have been made to the other Chevrolet models, although the horsepower figures have been juggled around some. Detail appear-



Chevrolet Caprice



Corvette Sting Ray



Chevrolet Camaro



Chevrolet Impala



Chevelle Malibu



Corvair Monza

ance changes have been effected in all models except the Corvair. The changes include the Kalifornia Kustom look of new wheel covers.

The Chevelle has new sheet metal pieces and wrap-around tail lights, plus a new luxury model, the "Concours" (equivalent, on a smaller scale, to the Caprice). The Chevy II has new front fenders, grille and trim. The Sting Ray has newly styled slots in its flanks to exhaust engine air, and on the 427-engined models, an even larger hood bulge (which, with the old spear sticking out of it, looks like a frog catching a fly). The Corvette also features a very powerful (400 hp), very tractable (fuel injection-like), 3 x 2-barrel carburetion set-up.

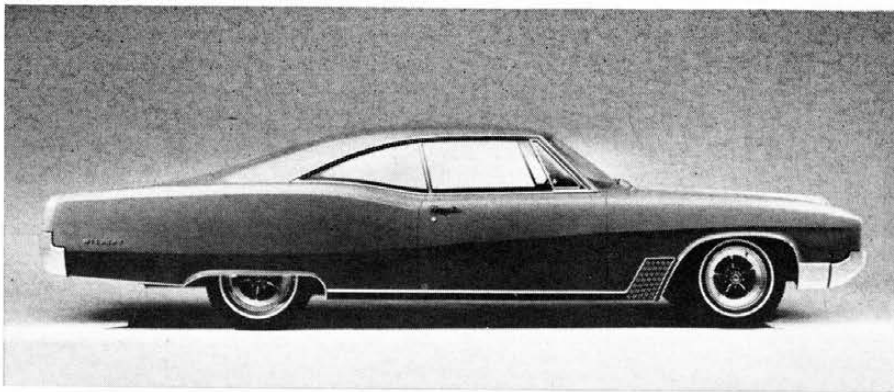
All in all, 1967 won't break any new ground for Chevrolet, except for the Camaro, and that exception will be the one everybody is going to keep an eye on.

BUICK

The best thing to do when you must improve on an obsolete design is throw it away and start fresh. This is exactly what Buick has done with their 14-year-old big V-8 engine block. The result is cleaner, more serviceable, and shows promise of being around at least until the turbines arrive.

The old block and head design were introduced in 1953 with a displacement of 322 cu. in., and through surgery (sometimes major), it grew to last year's 425 cu. in. But that was the limit. There was no room to stroke it, no room to bore it. It was increasingly obvious that the market of tomorrow would require a larger engine. Acting on this premise, Buick engineers designed a new block currently being produced in 400 and 430 cu. in. versions, with 340 and 360 hp, respectively. They share a common nodular cast iron crankshaft with a 3.90-in. stroke. It would seem that at least 500 cu. in. could eventually be found within this block although it retains a 4.75-in. bore spacing. The 430 cu. in. engine uses a 4.187-in. bore, with 4.04 in. for the 400.

Among the new features of this engine is the increased main bearing size—3.25 in., the largest of any V-8 in the industry. The old engine has 2.50-in. mains, which were large in comparison to other engines back in 1953. Serviceability has been improved by moving the distributor to the front, and relocating the oil filter to the right side just behind the fan belt and below



Buick Wildcat



Buick Electra



Buick Riviera



Pontiac GTO

the alternator (which is on top).

Intake port manifolding in the cast iron heads is fairly direct and straight, leading to 2.00-in. valves in both the 430 and 400 cu. in. versions. Exhaust routing, while not as critical for free breathing, is tortuously twisted to an acute angle from the valve stem, allowing room for the spark plugs above the exhaust manifold. Exhaust valve size is also the same for both engines at 1.625 in.

The third and fourth Buick engines for 1967 are unchanged from last year, displacing 300 and 340 cu. in. The smaller one produces 210 hp at 4600 rpm with 310 lbs./ft. of torque at 2400 rpm. Its larger cousin boasts 220 hp at 4000 rpm with 340 lbs./ft. of torque. They share the same 3.75-in. bore, while the smaller engine has a 3.40-in. stroke and the larger engine has a 3.85-in. stroke. This engine is one of two GM V-8s that has the dubious honor of being undersquare, the other being the 326 cu. in. Pontiac.

The last Buick engine is the tidy 225 cu. in. V-6 which began life as a shortened, cast iron version of the then-popular aluminum V-8. It offered prospective Special buyers V-something-power at a lower price. The aluminum V-8 has since been dropped completely and the rights to manufacture it have been sold to the Rover Company of England.

Buick model lines and styles continue much as before, with strong 1965 Pontiac overtones. A final new option in each line is disc brakes on the front wheels. Buick has long been a proponent of finned aluminum drums, and through the years, whatever their other faults, Buicks have stopped better than most other Detroit products. The new discs are of standard ventilated design, made by Buick.

PONTIAC

Pontiac has made only detail engine and engineering changes for 1967, but very little has actually been changed. The stylists, however, have practiced their art to a fare-thee-well. For the new year, the Pontiac Grand Prix has a 1966 GTO-like rear end treatment—this time up front, at the nose. The fenders end in a wedge-shape, with horizontal louvers above the grille, and the headlights are hidden behind a rotating grille piece.

Large Pontiacs are innovating hidden windshield wipers. This is accomplished through an upswept hood-line at the base of the wind-

shield. Sitting inside the car, you feel like you have the wipers inside with you. These recessed wipers are eminently practical too—they eliminate sun-glare problems.

Small Pontiacs have their share of styling tricks, many of them allotted to the GTO. The optional tachometer mounts very near the driver's eye level, but it's out on the hood, about 10 inches from the windshield wiper arm. The new Tempest Safari station wagon is equipped with a simulated wood appliqué along both sides, as are the larger Executive series wagons. GTOs continue to offer a pure performance image to the youth market: the top engine size has been increased from 389 to 400 cu. in., with the hot version producing 360 hp at 5100 rpm, and 438 lbs./ft. of torque at 3600 rpm.

In the large series the Catalina, Executive, Bonneville and Grand Prix names are continued, and each features its own distinctive sheet metal and roof treatment. The basic engine displaces 400 cu. in., and the top option is now a bored version of last year's 421 engine. The new displacement is officially listed as 428 cu. in., while actual tolerance figures give between 426 and 428. From all those inches, Pontiac extracts 376 hp at 5100 rpm in the hot version, with 462 lbs./ft. of torque at 3400. New options include a fire extinguisher, disc brakes for the front wheels only, and a self-leveling air system.

OLDSMOBILE

The new products from Oldsmobile Division feature an abundance of small but significant technical improvements which combine to produce a well-balanced and interesting model line for 1967 despite the fact that engine and transmissions are unchanged. Ninety-eight and 88 models have acquired all new sheet metal, and the Delmont 88 series has been added to replace the Dynamic 88. Jetstar 88 models have been dropped, as have Starfire hardtops. Toronados are continued with detail trim changes, and the slot over the headlight covers has been smoothed out. The smaller F-85 series is also practically unchanged, with the addition of a Cutlass convertible being the only exception. Engineering development of the Toronado has been limited to changing the front-wheel inboard drive joints from Rzeppa to a new three-ball design. The new system gives constant velocity universal action, more angular variation and slip motion in a simpler design using three



Pontiac Grand Prix



Pontiac Executive Station Wagon



Oldsmobile Cutlass Convertible



Oldsmobile 98

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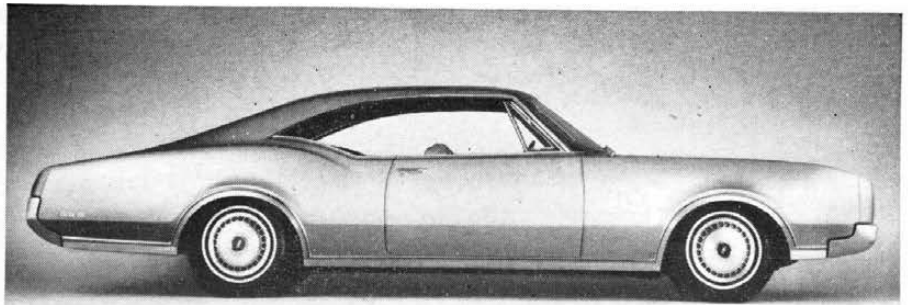
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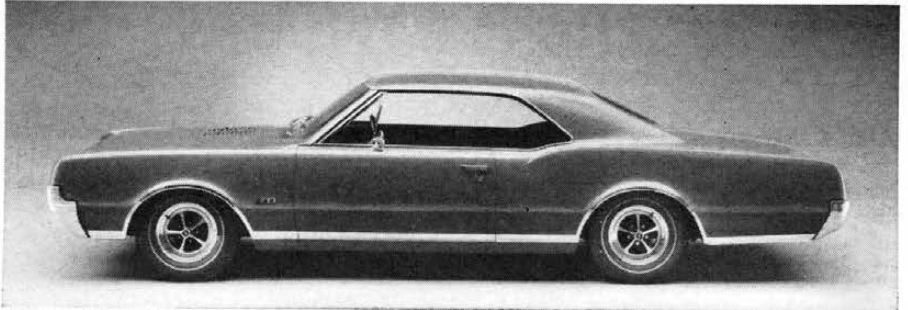
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Oldsmobile Toronado



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Cadillac De Ville Convertible



Cadillac Coupe De Ville

balls positioned in three equally-spaced bores. Steering geometry and power transmission systems are otherwise unchanged.

Along with introducing a disc-front brake option for 1967, Oldsmobile has also produced finned cast iron drum brakes for all 98 models. (Unfortunately, 98s are not available with discs.) Toronados use a brake-balance valve on both disc and drum brake models, while the other large cars use it only with the disc option. Essentially, this system simply reduces rear brake line pressure during heavy braking. This increases front brake effectiveness, while the reduced rear line pressure prevents rear-wheel lockup. F-85 models must get along without this option on their disc brakes, but reducing the rear-wheel cylinder diameter provides a similar effect. The new finned cast iron drums found on 98 models are based on the philosophy that the essential job to be performed by a brake is to absorb and dissipate heat as rapidly as possible. Cast iron does not radiate heat as rapidly as aluminum (a mark against it), but it does absorb three times as much heat per unit volume as aluminum. The finned drums used in the 98 are an attempt to combine the heat absorption qualities of cast iron with the maximum radiating area possible within the wheel confines. When we first viewed the new Oldsmobiles we had a chance to try the new drums, and they worked quite well, but the discs were better yet, particularly in the areas of rapid recovery after a rapid stop and consistent pedal pressure.

Even the rear axle has been given an engineering once-over. Oldsmobile now manufactures its own axle assembly, complete with hardened case and optional limited-slip. Reliability and peak power capacity have been improved and increased by reducing the number of internal pieces and hardening the case. A new welding technique is used to join the axle tube assemblies to the differential cases, resulting in what is claimed to be a leak-proof and stronger unit.

Oldsmobile captured 7.2 per cent of the total market in 1966, 4.2 per cent ahead of 1965. With the new cars they should do at least as well, and we hope they do better.

CADILLAC

Cadillac isn't about to tamper with the formula that has established it as the most successful luxury car in history, and therefore the 1967 mod-

els are basically identical to their predecessors. Evolutionary styling modifications, primarily involving more boldly sculptured side panels, will make the 1967 models visible to small boys and octogenarians, but to the man in the street they will be lumped into that ageless, ever-growing fleet of Caddies that silently plies the highways of America.

The big news from Cadillac is the Eldorado, which is examined in detail on page 42, but the bread-and-butter Fleetwood, DeVille and Calais series will have trouble capturing headlines on the basis of mechanical innovations. The light, thin-wall casting 429 cu. in. V-8 remains the standard powerplant for the entire line, and has been equipped with an improved valve train and a Quadra-jet carburetor. Cadillac Engineering has worked hard in the areas of bore finish and oil ring design to reduce oil consumption (which was ridiculously low in the first place). "Our customers are real sticklers about adding oil, and we have to be the best in the industry with things like this," said one Cadillac engineer.

The well articulated suspension, which provides good handling for a car of such bulk, remains, though Cadillac has continued its search for the totally silent automobile by making detail improvements in the body mounts. A mylar-laminated printed circuit that eliminates the wiring in the instrument cluster and a slide-out fuse box for simple servicing are other minor improvements that have been added throughout the Cadillac line.

AMERICAN MOTORS

Those nasty old torque tubes that used to hold the rear end of American Motors cars on, or at least *near* the ground, have at last been relegated to the junk pile. To take their place, AMC has devised a twin trailing link system with two upper lateral control arms which works quite well. In detail it is very similar to the current General Motors rear axle location system, and it's now standard on all AMC cars except the leaf-spring-suspended American.

'Sixty-seven is the year for major changes at AMC. Practically everything has been given a thorough redesign. The V-8 engine selection has been reduced to two displacements, with four horsepower ratings. The 290 cu. in. V-8 is offered with either two- or four-barrel carburetion producing 200 and 225 hp respectively. The 2-bbl version has a 9.0-to-one compression ratio and is designed for

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regular fuel. It has 285 lbs./ft. of torque, whereas the 225-hp, 4-bbl version requires premium fuel and produces 300 lbs./ft. of torque. Both are offered in the American series, but only the 200-hp version is offered in the larger cars. The second V-8 displacement is 343 cu. in. and it, too, comes in two power ratings, 235 hp for regular fuel with 9-to-one compression and 280 hp at 10-to-one compression for premium fuel. These horsepower figures are far from astounding, but the packages they come in are greatly improved over 1966.

The good-looking little American remains unchanged. All dimensions are the same as last year, and the same transmission combinations are offered for the 290 V-8 in the large cars. The standard engine is an in-line six producing 128 hp, and a more powerful 145- or 155-hp 232 cu. in. six is offered optionally.

The Rebel series has received a two-inch longer wheelbase (114 in.) and a similar increase in overall length. It is almost four inches wider, and each of these increases eventually shows up inside the car. The styling is of the modern pseudo-fastback variety, and is fairly reminiscent of the 1966 Ford Fairlane. The Ambassador and Marlin have grown to a 118-in. wheelbase, and have also received the full styling treatment. The Ambassador looks like the Rebel, while the Marlin appears more graceful than last year. The previous angularity of the rear deck has been eliminated, although the ultra-small skylight that suffices for a rear window has been retained. With the introduction of American Motors' new 343 cu. in. V-8, the revived for a year 327 V-8 has been dropped completely. This new engine is of conventional cast-iron construction throughout, since it's simply a bored version of the 290. Both engines use the same malleable cast iron crankshaft, with five main bearings of 2.75-in. diameter, 2.10-in. crankpins and cast iron connecting rods.

American Motors has missed fairly often in the past. But on the face of the 1967 product line, next year should be a different story. They have given their cars a solid rear suspension, the engine line-up is consolidated and more realistic, and last of all, the cars are very attractive. If the public will accept the cars on the same basis accorded Ford, Chrysler and GM, 1967 could mean a turnabout for AMC.

The 1967 model year will not go down as a great one for new en-

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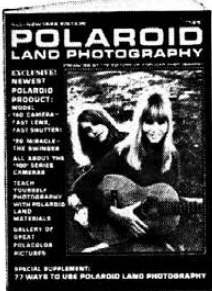
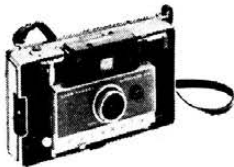
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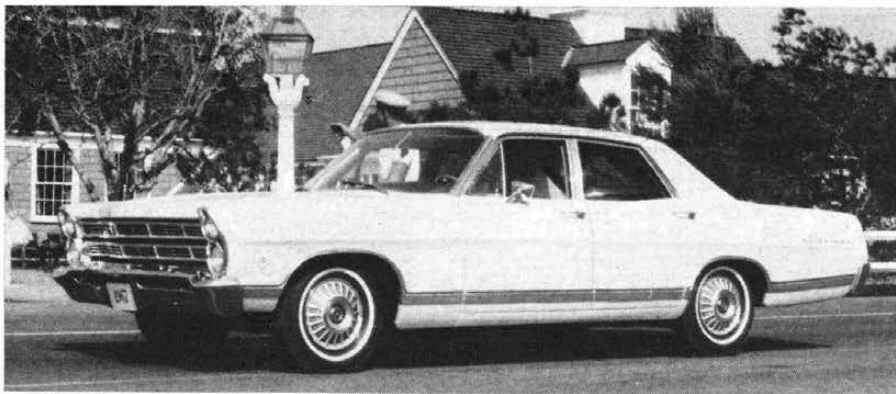
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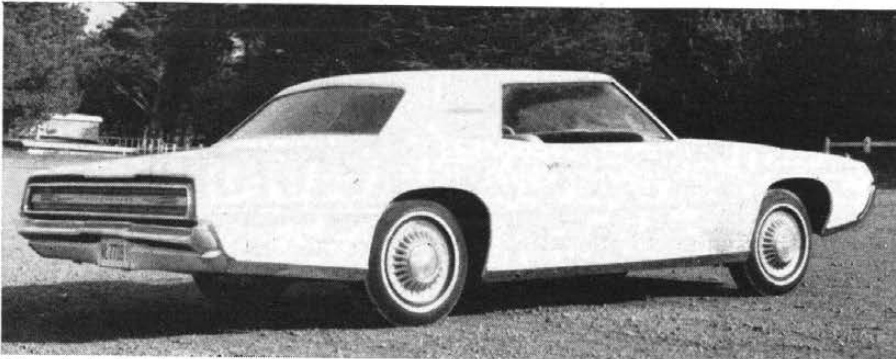
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gineering or mechanical innovation, despite the influx of "personal cars." The major companies have spent their greatest efforts in producing an answer to the Mustang, and as these cars appeared we have found them to be straightforward adaptations of existing components, fitted to conventional chassis.

As a result, the standard lines have received only detail attention. This doesn't make them any worse

than in 1966, but since the changes are only minor, the improvements are proportional. Of course, many of the new cars have all new sheet metal, but this happens almost every year now and great looks do not make a car work better.

It is as yet too early to guess about 1968, but we expect it will be the Year of Innovation. If so, 1967 may be remembered as the Year of the Rear View Mirror. **clp**