

Can The Establishment Peddle 'Muscle' Cars?

By DAN J. GILMARTIN

If one picture is worth a thousand words, then likely a visual image of Raquel which should rate three or four words — although "wow" appears sufficient.

And it's here that we gapbridgers change 180 degrees. Replicas "wow" with "groovy," do not pass go, do not collect \$200— and let's get out there and sell more cars.

Raquel, sufficiently endowed to appeal both to the younger set as well as the older, was electronically illustrated the other day to emphasize how one major auto company expects its greying and modestly tailored salesman to reach sideburned, bell-bottomed prospects.

WHEN RAQUEL, clad in a powder blue bikini was flashed onto the screen, a moderator explained to some 400 salesmen and dealers how the Hollywood performer related to overhead cams, horsepower, axle ratio, rear tire traction, four-speed transmission and, more pointedly, alignment and chassis.

In attendance at the sales session held at the Ford Central Office Building in Dearborn were several Observer-land dealers and salesmen.

It was all part of a presentation to reach an expanding new market—drag racing. And, obviously, how to ring the cash register with the economic assistance of the some 20 million young people who will be attending drag strip events this year.

When track promoters close out the 1969 season, they will have staged more than 10,000 race events at about 800 licensed tracks throughout the country. According to the auto makers, the young people to at-

Car salesmen are being told to visit teen hangouts to learn the jet set's language. The purpose: To help them sell "performance" cars to race-conscious youngsters.

tendence will flock to the nearest car dealer if they manage to dazzle the crowd with the "fastest and grooviest" of the many "muscle" cars now on the market.

STATISTICS SHOW that about 35,000 "muscle"—or performance—automobiles were sold in 1964. This jumped to 370,000 in 1968.

This year car makers expect to sell 500,000. They're looking to 1970 when they believe 750,000 hot cars will be sold to complement an overall 12 million car year.

But to accomplish this sales feat, many car dealers and salesmen are going to have to make a 180-degree turn.

The average car salesman is somewhat older than the prospect who walks into the showroom seeking a shiny, new "muscle" machine. And, unlike his older counterpart who is looking for wheels that can get him back and forth to work in comfort, the younger buyer is better informed not only regarding what's under the hood but what can be put under the hood with a little weekend ingenuity.

He'll want to know if he can go from 0-60 mph in about seven seconds and what he can hit, flat out, going a quarter of a mile.

"THIS IS IMPORTANT," the moderator said. "If a young buyer is told he'll hit 100 mph at the end of a quarter-mile run, and that our competitor can only do 98 mph, he knows that he'll beat the other car by two car lengths, or two-tenths of a second."

"Kids" are informed. Don't snore them, the salesmen and dealers were admonished. "If they feel our cars can't cut it on the street, they'll look elsewhere."

Are the auto companies pushing speed? Will the future of "muscle" cars rest with that vital one-tenth of a second? If a competitor markets a performance car that can hit 105 mph during a quarter-mile, will it inspire other firms to work under the hood until their cars can get the distance in 10? "

"WE'RE NOT PUSHING 'street-dragging.' We're merely recognizing such a thing exists," said one auto company official. "We'd much rather see the youngsters race their cars at drag strips on weekends."

Salesmen and dealers were encouraged to visit neighborhood drive-ins on Friday and Saturday nights to observe first hand how the younger car owners are displaying their new "muscle" cars and to how this domestic "jet set" reacts when they hear the roar of the high performance engines and the screech of the tires as a pair of aficionados rookies out of the parking area an onto the main drag.

The credit line should read: Choreography by Werner Von Braun.

AUTO MAKERS expect to sell more "muscle" cars through several image-building means. First, there is performance. If a company has a hot stock

car or drag racing team performing and winning throughout the country, these drivers are going to help sell cars through the publicity they'll receive in newspapers.

Secondly, the factory will assist by pouring millions into advertising. This comes the turnout.

The younger prospects want to be like some salesmen. In their general age group, or as a second best choice, a car salesman who can talk their language.

As part of the sales presentation, the older car salesman

were treated to a hip sales talk lavishly lathered with such niceties as a "groovy hood," a "now generation fender," a "jet with it transmission," an "in the set of wheels," and, like all older moderators attempting to relate to the young the salesmen were told how to get the youngsters to "do their thing."

CAR DEALERS were encouraged to participate in weekend drag strip events and send salesmen to high school sporting events.

"Learn how to talk to the

kids and teach them how to be 'king of the hill,' get with it," they were told. "Read the car buff magazines so you know what the youngsters are talking about. Be part of the 'in' crowd yourself."

Is it worth it for the near-aging salesman to hit himself down to the Mod Shop and buy something out of Cramby Street so he can relate? Should he give the brush to an 18-year-old who walks into the salesroom or should he leap onto the youthful prospect like a rooster on a June bug?

You'd better believe it! Mar-

ket studies have proven that the young car buyer will spend up to 80 per cent of his take-home income for a new car—obviously, a "muscle" car.

"THE YOUNGSTERS are out working so they can buy a car," the salesmen were told. "They will pay full sticker price for a performance car and they'll pay the high insurance rates that go along with it. They're dedicated."

And if the older, more established salesman can't get himself "turned on" to what's going on, it's likely he'll be replaced

by a younger salesman. It's started to happen now. Many dealers started to stock "muscle" cars have three youthful salesmen who know what's going on under the hood.

What about the dealer who decides not to put a "muscle" car alongside his luxury automobile and cater to both buyers?

"He'll never know what hit him," one dealer predicted. "By 1975, the 'muscle' car market will represent about 40 per cent of total auto sales. If a dealer doesn't get in now, he may as well forget about the future."

3 Busloads Set For Anti-War March On D.C.

Three busloads of peace demonstrators headed for the "March on Washington, D.C." will leave Schoolcraft Community College Friday, Nov. 14.

They are part of a 43-bus contingent from the metropolitan Detroit area joining non-so-called demonstrators from across the nation in a mass anti-war protest.

They apparently were not discouraged by President Richard Nixon's "I have a plan" speech Nov. 3.

When first discussed in September, the Washington action was to be much smaller and composed mostly of GI's and veterans.

Schoolcraft Community College. The workshop concluded Moratorium Day.

THIRTY-SIX PEOPLE were signed up that evening, enough to fill one bus. Since then, enrollments have tripled.

The buses will leave from the north parking lot, located in front of Waterman Center on campus about 7 p.m.

Returning from Washington after dinner Sunday, Nov. 16, demonstrators will arrive at Schoolcraft about 11 p.m.

The March on Washington is sponsored by the nation-wide New Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam, as was the Oct. 15 Moratorium Day.

ALSO PLANNED is a March Against Death Nov. 13 and 14 in Washington, D.C.

Mrs. Jeanne Harsted, a member of the Livonia New Democratic Coalition and spokesman for the Committee for Peace said:

"Their intention is to march against death and to demonstrate for life, for an immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all U.S. troops from Vietnam."

"For self-determination for Vietnam and black America; and for an end to poverty and racism."

SINCE THEN, according to Observerland promoters, the idea has "exploded" and a "huge" number of students and adults have made plans to join in.

This information comes from a spokesman for the Committee for Peace, which is the local coordinating body for efforts launched nationally and headed in this state by Detroit Coalition to End the War Now (DCEWN).

The three Committee for Peace buses are a result of the Washington Bus Trip Committee formed at the Oct. 15 Workshop for Peace held at



CLEMENT R. SMALL will move to Plymouth to become controller of Anchor Coupling's Automotive Division. His newly created post is part of a plan for better fiscal control due to the firm's growth. Small had been an assistant auditor for Anchor Coupling in Libertyville, Ill. since 1966.



By MARVIN KEMP

Many homeowners comment on the poor appearance of wall spaces above sinks, ranges and work counters due to continuous washing off splashed grease and soapy water. There is a way to protect these areas so they can be washed repeatedly over the years. Three common tile materials can be cemented to the wall. First, ceramic tile a quarter-inch thick and about four inches square comes in pastel colors. Second, a metal tile, thin and about four inches square is available. Third, there is a plastic tile, thin and the same measurements that is popular. A coated towel is generally used and application of all kinds is the same.

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Reserves Drag Racing To March Seminar Nov. 12 Sunday

The 70th Army Reserve Division (Training), based in Livonia, will march in the annual Veterans' Day parade at the University of Detroit Stadium Sunday, Nov. 9, at 1:30 p.m.

A drag racing seminar, designed to teach auto racing fans the best ways to set up their cars and the safest way to drive, will be open to the public Wednesday, Nov. 12, at the North Bros. Ford dealership, 2000 Ford Road, Garden City. The seminar will begin at 7 p.m.

Hubert Piat, a member of the Ford Division's Drag Team, will conduct the seminar, which will feature the Fairlane Cobra and the Mustang Mach I.

Ford officials estimate that more than 20 million fans will attend more than 10,000 racing events at 800 recognized tracks in the country, making drag racing one of the fastest growing sports in the country.

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C'ville FHA Will Install

Officers of Clarenceville High School's Future Homemakers of America will be installed at a mother-daughter banquet on Nov. 10 beginning at 6:30 p.m. in the high school.

New officers are Karen Hoffmeyer, president; Terry Sherman, vice president; Laura Golden, secretary; Kay Howe, treasurer; Debbie Dickson, historian; Margaret Katjo, parliamentarian; and Debby Burger, song leader.

FHA members are selling stationary for \$1 per box.

Easter Seal Stamp Set

A postage stamp focusing attention on the need for rehabilitation of the handicapped will be issued next month to honor the golden anniversary convention of the National Easter Seal Society.

Those wishing information concerning first day covers may secure it from the Easter Seal Society of Western Wayne County in Inster, PA 2-3055.

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