

THE DODGE DART continued

how well the Dodge and Dart will handle on those rolling dips which most of our cross-country highways seem to be so full of.

Brakes have been redesigned for 1960 and although all models of the Dodge and Dart use 11-inch cast iron drums, their width varies somewhat to give three different totals of lining area. All Dart models except station wagons and cars equipped with the optional D-500 engine use brake drums that are two inches wide and have a total lining area of 184 square inches. Dart wagons have 2½-inch front drums, 2-inch rear drums and a total of 207 square inches of lining area. Darts equipped with the optional D-500 Ram Inducted engine have 2½-inch wide drums both front and rear with 230 square inches of lining. This latter brake arrangement with 230 inches of lining is standard for all Dodge models. Although no mention is made in specification sheets for the Dodge or Dart, we believe that it might also be possible to order these cars with the 12-inch brakes used on the heavier Chrysler cars. If so, the slight additional charge would be well spent since they have 251 square inches of lining area.

The redesigning we mentioned for 1960 brakes concerns the way the backing plate has been changed to help align the brake shoes. Since the introduction of the "total contact" type of Chrysler brake, backing plates have not really been used, instead the sheet metal stamping commonly referred to as a backing plate was used for nothing more than a shield to keep rocks, mud, etc. from the brakes. The brakes could operate just as well with the shield removed. The most common complaint from owners of Chrysler products has been squealing brakes, so for 1960 a new backing plate was designed with three platforms to keep each brake shoe in alignment with the drum at all times. The better alignment insures a square contact between shoe and drum, therefore no more squealing.

While driving the new cars, we found them both to have excellent brakes although the Dodge with 230 inches of brake lining was certainly superior to the Dart with 184 inches of lining. Despite being a slightly heavier car, the Dodge would make several high speed stops before starting to show signs of fade. The Dart was not quite as positive in the

braking department. Both cars had the optional power brake assist and as with all of the full sized cars we have tested in recent years, we recommend power brakes, especially if the car is equipped with some of the heavier options such as V8 engine and automatic transmission.

Steering ratios for 1960 are 30.16 to 1, without power steering and 19.15 to 1 with power steering. Needless to say, the powerless ratio is far too slow so the power steering option is nearly a must. Although newcomers to Chrysler's power steering often criticize the method when comparing to GM's or Ford's power steering, once they become accustomed to Full-Time steering, they find it as easy to operate as any of the others.

Dodge's 1960 news value for the average reader of HRM is in the engine department. There is one completely new six cylinder engine and an ingenious new induction system that is optional on a pair of engines. The six is a slightly larger version of the engine designed for the new Chrysler economy car, Valiant. In 225-inch displacement form, the engine is standard equipment for the Dart Seneca and Pioneer. It is an overhead valve, in-

