

PREVIEW OF THE 1964 CARS

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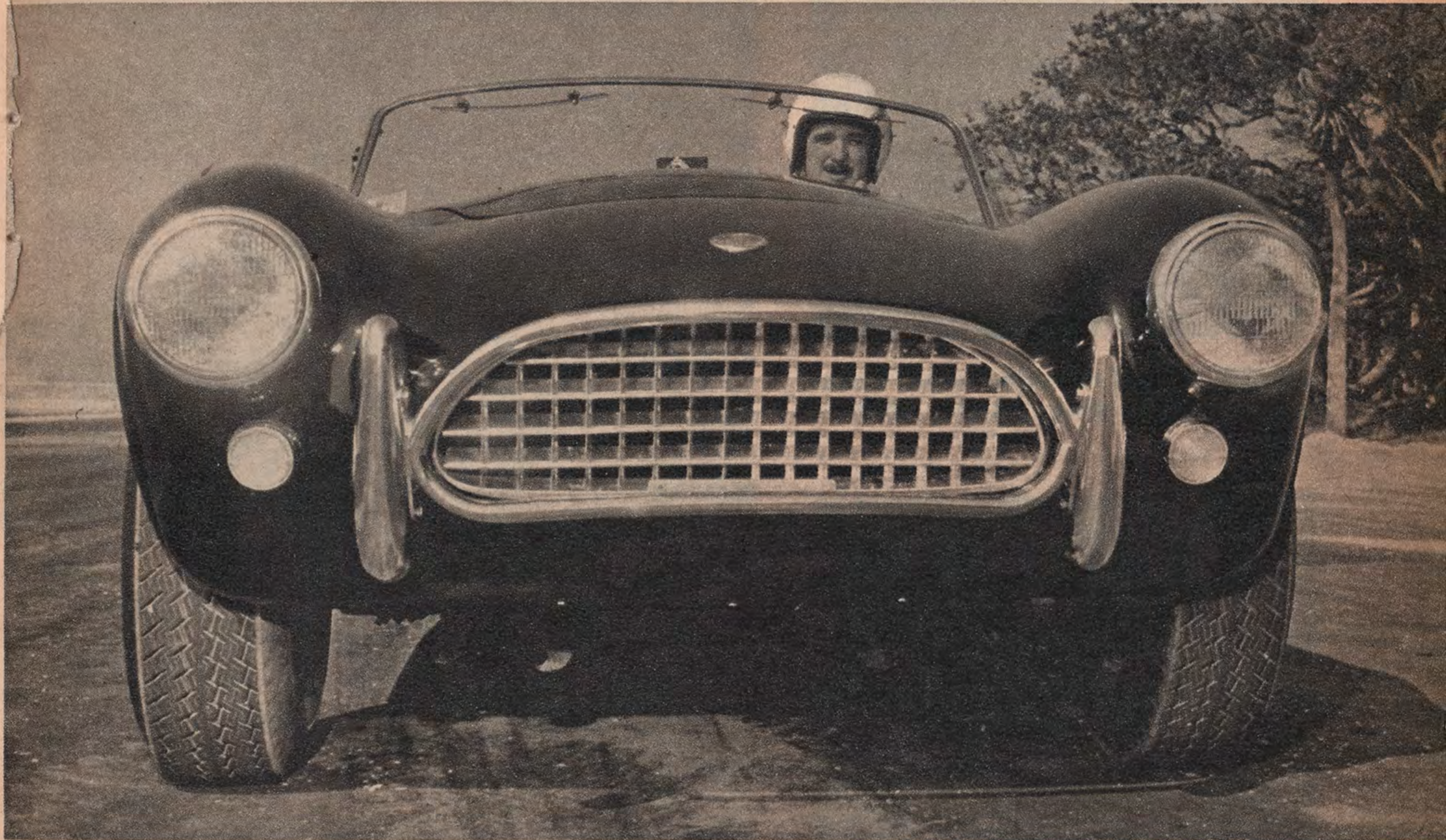


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America's New Ford-P

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McCAHILL TESTS...



THE NEW COBRA

This hairy-chested rat will take some big ones, says Tom, and maybe even win the Le Mans.

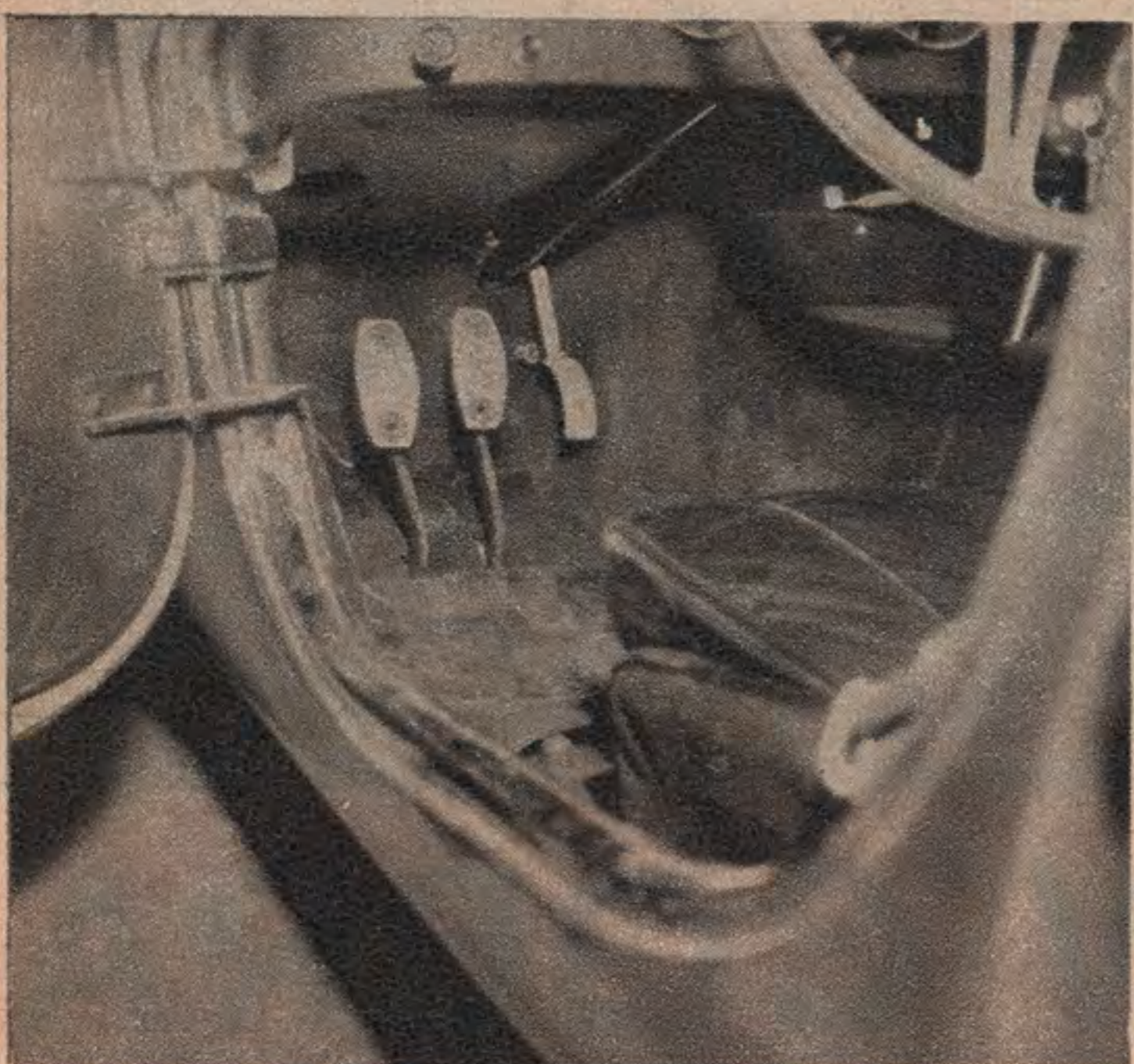
By Tom McCahill

NOT since the Cunninghams of ten years back has an Americanized sports car caused quite so much speculation as the new Cobra. Similar to the Allards of a decade ago, the Cobra is a half-English, half-American venture that is getting more American by the hour. The base of the Cobra is the English AC Sports Car (and the new job sometimes is called the AC Cobra), which is close to ten years old in design, with an American Ford engine shoved in the snout to produce that good old Yankee torque and horsepower.

In the early fifties Sidney Allard used to supply English chassis and



BUCKET SEATS, Stewart-Warner instruments, wind wings mark interior.



CLUTCH PRESSURE effort is cut a third from normal; big engine is well-muffled.

COBRA HOLDS to a corner like a nailed-on toupee. Its solid feel impressed Tom.

bodies to Bill Frick, who put in new Cadillac engines and later the more powerful Chrysler V8s. For several years these hybrid Caddy and Chrysler Allards dominated the sports car scene in the United States. Then Briggs Cunningham's Cunninghams with Chrysler engines took over and remained unbeat-



able on our circuits for several years.

As all old-time sports car buffs know, Cunningham folded his manufacturing tent a number of years ago. Then factory-produced machines such as the Ferrari, Maserati, Porsche and others began winning regularly. Later, Lance Reventlow built his Scarabs with

Chevrolet engines and cleaned up on these shores. He was about ready for Le Mans when the FIA played patty-cake with the formula again, eliminating engines the size of a Chevrolet. This was the last major American effort for the hybrids until Carroll Shelby came up with the Cobra.

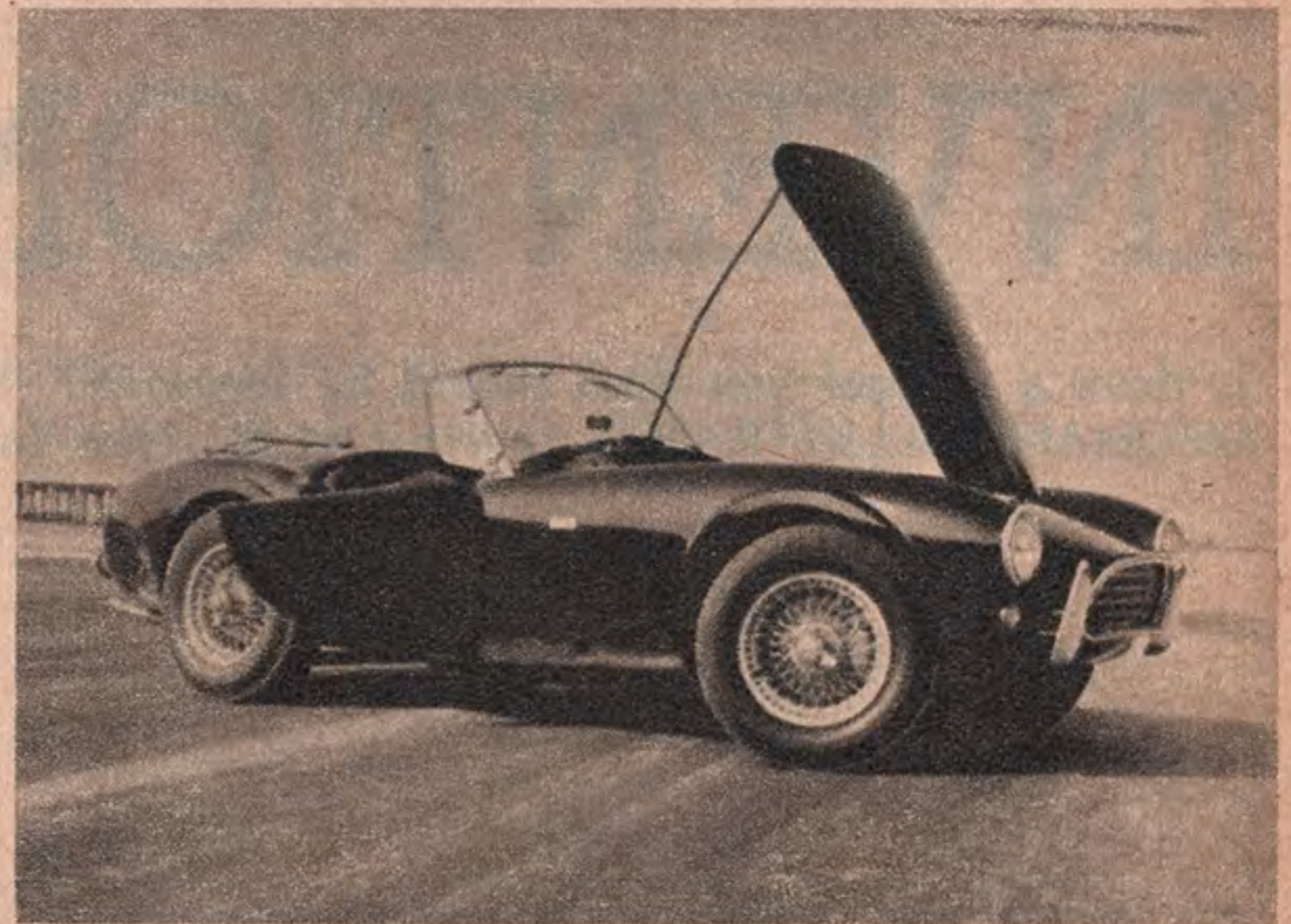
Though it is a hard nut for sports car purists to swallow, Detroit builds some of the greatest power plants the world has ever seen. They are great for three simple reasons. Endurance. Torque. Developed horsepower. This endurance factor comes principally from the fact that the metallurgy that goes into these blockbusters is far advanced over the European counterpart. In building a Grand Prix car abroad, lightness usually is the most important factor next to strength. In Detroit, light engines also are desired, but not at the expense of endurance.

The 1962 Cobra, street version, used Ford's Challenger V8 engine, which displaced 260 cubic inches. The competition job for '62 used the Ford 289-inch mill. For '63 both the street and competition rigs will use the bigger 289 Ford pot.

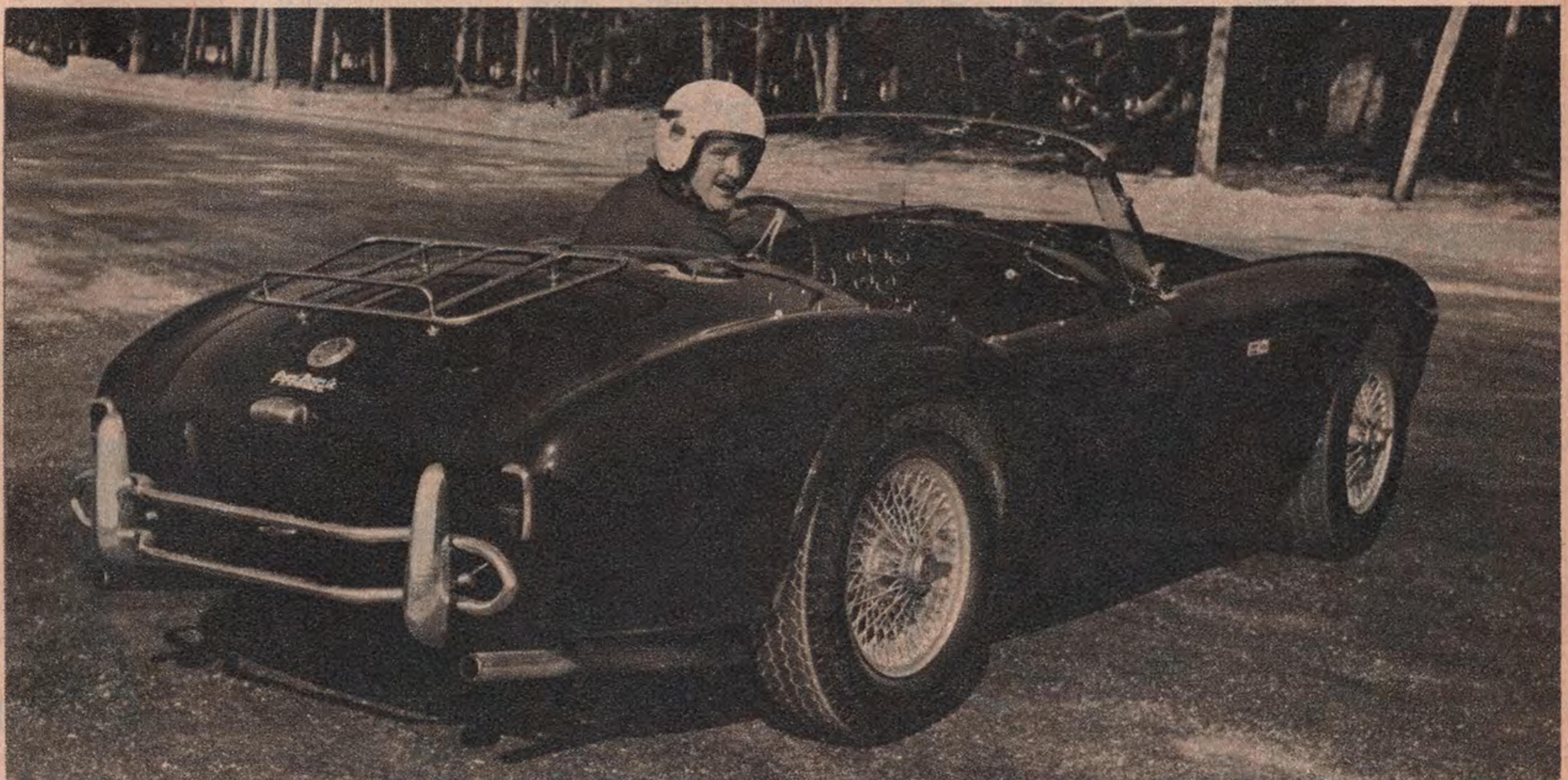
Carroll Shelby, once considered the

finest sports car driver in America, retired from the wheel-twirling part of the business and is the father and head-boy of the American Cobra. Most of the work on these potent rigs is done in California.

In early competition, including the 3-Hour Continental at Daytona, the Cobras were taking everything on the course, including Ferraris and Chevrolet Sting Rays, until they broke down—which they [Continued on page 134]



ENGLISH AC chassis with Ford mill up front for torque is the base substance of Cobra.



TRIM as an antelope, says Tom. The trunk's about right for a six-pack and a bathing suit.