

**WHENEVER HE RACES, DEL BLADES PROVES TO BE  
THE**



# **MAN TO BEAT!**



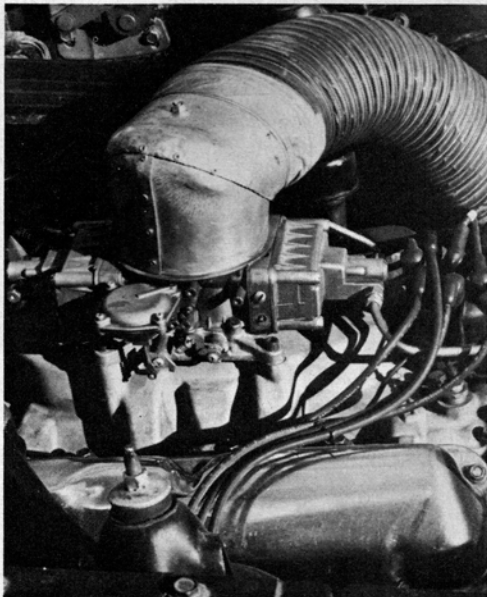
BY EUGENE PROPST

"Trial and error is how I learned. I couldn't even give a tune-up when I moved into my shop six years ago." This was the answer given by one of the most respected mechanics in Arizona, Delmar Blades, when asked how he learned all the secrets that make him the owner of the world's fastest stock Falcon, one that makes Del Blades the man to beat!

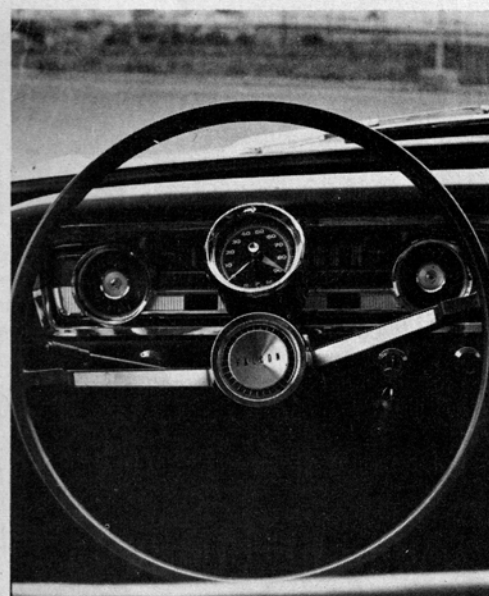
His trial and error efforts proved themselves in the 1964 AHRA Winter Nationals, when Del mounted a 1960 Chevy with a 348 cu.in. to fight for top stock honors. After closing the gate on many a competitor he climbed to the top only to face the rompin', stompin' 426

cu.in. wedge of the "Ramchargers," using the AHRA spot system for Chevy vs. MoPar, but the effort was in vain—horsepower and cubes took it, but the name of Del Blades made quite a deep imprint on such people as Gas Ronda, Al Eckstrand, the Golden Commandos, Phil Bonner, and many more that day.

After the Winter Nationals, Paradise Ford of Scottsdale, Ariz., offered Del a chance to switch to Ford and see what he could do with the somewhat new 289 cu.in. engine in an all-metal Falcon. After some time for thinking, the switch was made and "Engine by Del Blades" was now to be seen on the Paradise Ford's white Falcon.



Del Blades (left) does the tuning as well as the building of the engine that powers the Ford that bears his name. Del, with the help of Paradise Ford of Scottsdale, Arizona, is shown (below left) running away from his competition, as is usually the case. A shot of the engine (above left) reveals a tube used for ramming the air down the carbs of the 294 cu. in. engine that has been so reliable for Del. The Falcon, which from all outward appearances looks much like the one that your wife might run down to the store in (above and below), has turned 112.50 with a e.t. of 12.39.



Before it was to make its debut at Bee Line Dragway, a few changes took place. First, it was gutted to the legal limit and the interior received a Sun tach and gauges with a Hurst linkage to finish the interior.

The small Falcon rear end got the full Blades treatment with a Detroit non-spin alongside some 5.38 gears. To stop any wheel hop that might occur, a special set of traction bars were made and installed. Finishing off the traction setup, a seven-inch pair of M&H slicks were added.

The engine went the whole route too. First the bore was taken the

legal .030 over, making 294 cu.in. The lifters were replaced by Sig Erson goodies, while the pushrods and rocker arms stayed stock. The cam was also Erson, but a special experimental grind was chosen. Del decided on Forgedtrue pop-up pistons to bring the compression to 12.5, added a Cobra high rise, a set of Doug's headers, and went racing.

The best to date is 112.50 mph with 12.39 e.t., which makes his Falcon the middle eliminator at almost all of the big meets he goes to. He took Middle eliminator at the 1965 World's Championship at Long Beach, walked home with mucho goodies and the title of "The World's Fastest Stock 289." The man to beat!