

ROAD & TRACK K 6/58

THE MOTOR ENTHUSIASTS' MAGAZINE



June 1958

35¢ the copy



Differing from the DS-19 only in the most minor details (like the directional signals), the ID is utterly functional.

CITROËN ID-19

A STRANGE and wonderful car that leaves me with mixed emotions," says our Associate Editor, and his reaction can be assumed to be a typical one. This more practical, and to us more pleasing, version of the DS-19 (Road & Track, November 1956) mixes sport and luxury in the uninhibited manner that seems to have characterized all Citroën products since 1934.

Once anyone has mastered the labeled switches like *clignotants* and *starter* (it's the choke) and a selection of unnamed plastic knobs, he can get into an ID and drive away, which is more than can be said for a DS. Gone are the automatic clutch and hydraulic controls for the unusual shifting mechanism of the DS; in their place are a conventional pendant pedal and a good 4-speed column shift with synchromesh on 2nd, 3rd, and 4th, which is geared up for a 3.31:1 final ratio. Another standard pedal has replaced the minute power brake button of the DS, and this, too, we like better, though it takes an inordinately strong right leg at times. Brake feel is like that of a Volkswagen.

Nylon fan is in light shroud, fluid tank by spare wheel.

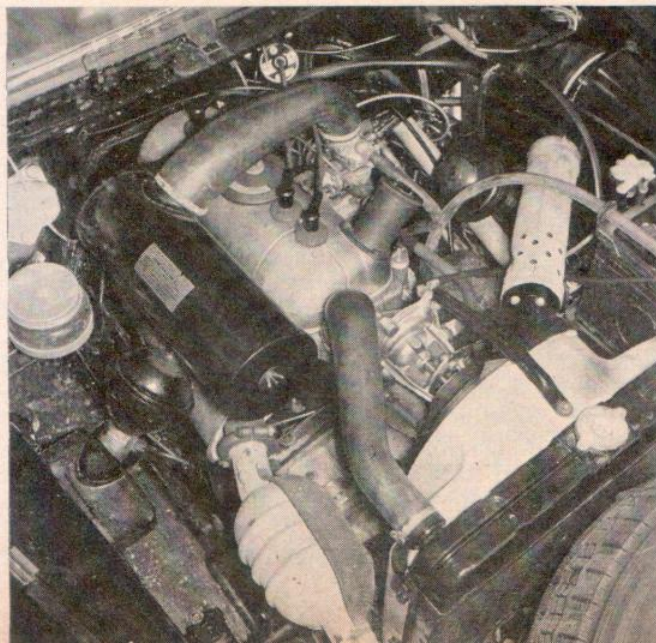
A bigger "spokeless" wheel gives better leverage for the unboosted rack and pinion steering. Turning radius is excellent for a front drive car. Steering is heavy only when the car is almost at a standstill. At all other times, control is exact and shock is absent. Some understeer would be expected with such a radical weight distribution, and that's all there is—just enough for the driver to remain master. The steering is a major contribution to the car's chief asset, the ability to cover enormous distances on straight or sharply curving roads without tiring driver or passengers. After three hours of sleep one night, we averaged 48 miles per hour over crowded highways for 11 hours and felt ready for more. This was partly due to the blissful comfort of the "bed" made from the passenger's seat. The back will recline at any of infinite positions between almost straight up and all the way down, and the driver's seat does the same for an overnight stop.

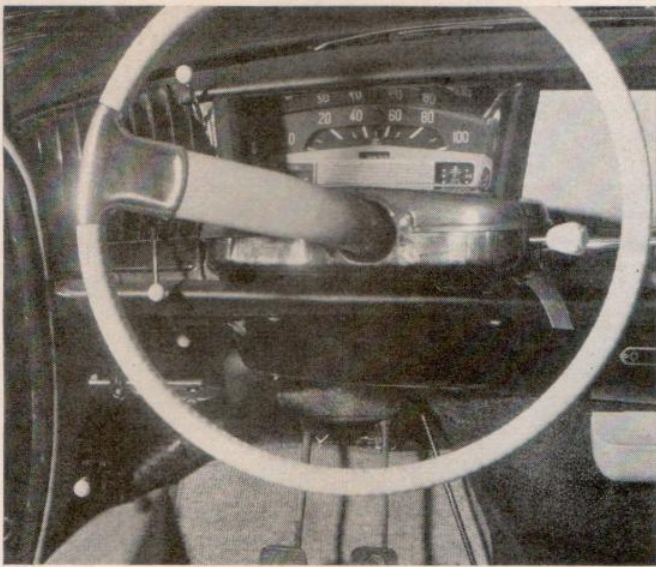
Suspension is exactly like the sensational installation on the fancier DS, and unquestionably gives the most com-

Exhaust goes from expansion chamber to muffler under spare.



PHOTOGRAPHY: POOLE





White knob at lower left raises car. Handbrake is above.

the DS brought down to earth, but not too far

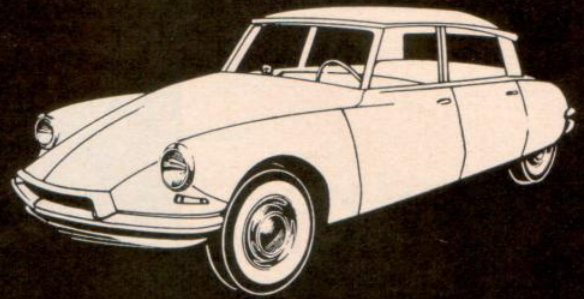
fortable all-around ride of any car built anywhere in the world. At moderate speeds on boulevards, the Citroën's advantages over conventional cars are slight; tar strips and small bumps are felt about the same as in a softly sprung American car. And the car will bottom on the worst of highway dips; a series of them in the Arizona desert made us drop our 80-85 cruising speed by about 20 miles per hour momentarily. But even when the nitrogen-and-brake-fluid-filled spheres are pressed to the limit of their insulating ability, there is no need to fear loss of control. One brief jolt, and the superb ride continues.

The "disadvantages" mentioned are the only ones in a remarkable ride/handling package. A rough road only brings out the best features, and on frightful surfaces the car truly rides better at high speeds. Most enjoyable of all to us was its competence in fast curves, when it never even disturbed the rest of a sleeping rider. There's never a sound from the standard, steel-reinforced Michelin X's.

All four wheels are independently suspended, the front ones using equal length control arms and ball joints. Rear wheels have single trailing arms. Wheel motion travels by way of a hydraulic piston to the lower portion of the sphere for that wheel. There it applies or releases pressure on the hydraulic fluid and thence to the diaphragm that separates the fluid from the nitrogen in the upper chamber. The gas and fluid thus interact on one another, preventing bounding even on the dips mentioned. Eerie pump noise intrudes into the passenger compartment from time to time, for the levelizer is constantly kept busy maintaining the car on an even keel. After a stop, though nosedive is extremely slight, the hood will rise.

As on the DS, ground clearance can be varied from 6.5 to 11.5 inches with a hand lever near the floor at the driver's left. A white line marks the normal riding position. For broken field running, underpinnings are saved by the high position, in which the smooth ride vanishes. Low position is used only for tire changing or amusement. The former is handled by raising the car high, placing the jack (mounted up front, with the spare tire and tools) under the desired side, and lowering the suspension. The

ROAD & TRACK ROAD TEST 169



CITROEN ID-19

SPECIFICATIONS

List price.....	\$2835
Curb weight.....	2640
Test weight.....	2990
distribution, %.....	64/36
Dimensions, length.....	189
width.....	70.5
height.....	57.9
Wheelbase.....	123.0
Tread, f and r.....	59.1/51.2
Tire size (mm).....	165-400
Brake lining area.....	75.2
Steering, turns.....	4.1
turning circle.....	38
Engine type.....	4 cyl, ohv
Bore & stroke.....	3.07 x 3.94
Displacement, cu in.....	116.6
cc.....	1911
Compression ratio.....	7.50
Bhp.....	66 @ 4000
equivalent mph.....	92.4
Torque.....	97.6 @ 2500
equivalent mph.....	57.6

PERFORMANCE

Top speed (avg), mph.....	87.4
best timed run.....	91.9
3rd (5000).....	80
2nd (5000).....	52
1st (5000).....	27

FUEL CONSUMPTION

Normal range, mpg.....	24/29
------------------------	-------

ACCELERATION

0-30 mph, sec.....	5.0
0-40 mph.....	8.0
0-50 mph.....	13.0
0-60 mph.....	19.1
0-70 mph.....	27.2
0-80 mph.....	45.5
0-90 mph.....
0-100 mph.....
Standing 1/4 mile.....	22.2
speed at end, mph.....	64

GEAR RATIOS

4th (0.85), overall.....	3.31
3rd (1.23).....	4.77
2nd (1.79).....	7.34
1st (3.54).....	13.8

TAPLEY DATA

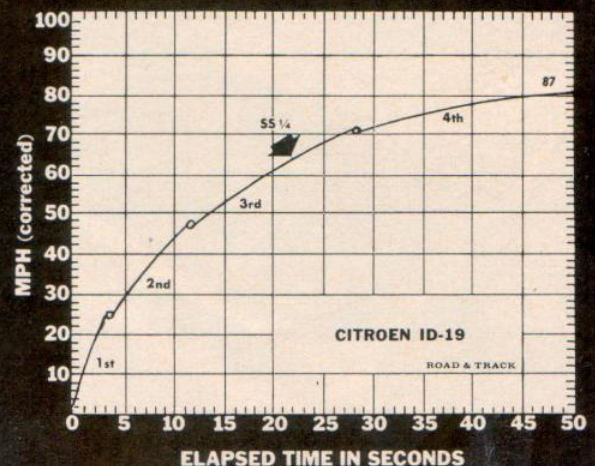
4th, lb/ton.....	150 @ 38
3rd.....	220 @ 34
2nd.....	340 @ 30
Total drag at 60 mph, lb.....	145

CALCULATED DATA

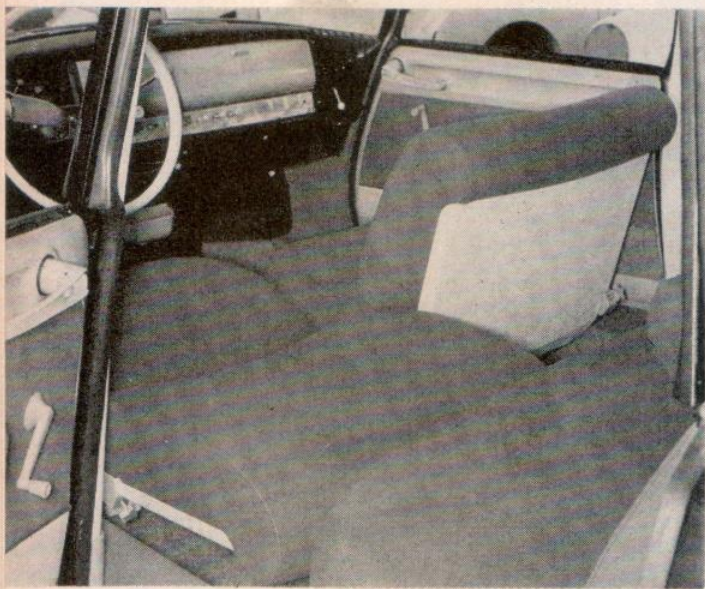
Lb/hp (test wt).....	45.4
Cu ft/ton mile.....	58.8
Mph/1000 rpm (4th).....	23.1
Engine revs/mile.....	2600
Piston travel, ft/mile.....	1705
Rpm @ 2500 ft/min.....	3810
equivalent mph.....	88.0
R&T wear index.....	44.4

SPEEDOMETER ERROR

30 mph.....	actual 29.2
40 mph.....	38.6
50 mph.....	48.1
60 mph.....	57.6
70 mph.....	66.1
80 mph.....	76.3
95 mph.....	91.9
100 mph.....



CITROEN *continued*



Though short, the bed is amply comfortable for a night's rest. Painted windowsills and door latch-lock-grab bar, with extensive use of plastic, do not carry out the car's luxury feel. Trunk floor is the belly pan.



jack, of course, holds its side of the car in the air. One lug bolt fastens each wheel, and one bolt only need be removed to unshroud the rear ones.

Front brakes are inboard discs and the rear ones conventional drums. One valuable feature of the DS that we missed from this car is the device that apportions front and rear braking pressure according to passenger or baggage load at the rear of the car. A powerful hand brake at the driver's left is also not so pleasant to use as the DS's emergency foot pedal, which would tend to crowd this front compartment.

Everywhere you look, even this "conventional" Citroën abounds with clever features. Just to inspect one in a showroom is an experience, and of course driving and riding in it is a must. One thing only may keep Americans away:

Acceleration and speed, as the data panel shows, are not the car's claim to fame. Fast starts (even for the power available) are jerky and noisy, and it is best to confine exuberance until one is underway. Free use of the well synchronized gearbox will then pay off, the practical top limits in 2nd and 3rd being 47 and 72 mph, respectively. Even so, the time required to pass another car at highway speeds is considerable. The engine is that which Citroën has used for years, a large, pushrod-operated, overhead-valve in-line 4, its compression ratio now increased to 7.5:1 and with hemispherical combustion chambers in its aluminum head. An integral intake manifold gives a Porsche-like sound. Regular gasoline is quite rich enough, fuel mileage is exceptional considering the weight, and hand-controlled spark advance is both diverting and beneficial. We were able to increase top speed by 4.5 mph with it at full retard, and acceleration in the lower ranges improved with the opposite treatment.

Obviously the gentlemen of the Quai de Javel, so radical in their approach to most portions of their cars, feel that an engine is meant to get an automobile from place to place with a minimum of trouble and expense, and it is hard to argue with this thesis, except from the viewpoint of fun. What are Citroën's engine plans? A light, air-cooled flat 6 was one of the pre-announcement rumors about the DS, and the only one that didn't pan out; let's hope we shall still see it. The front end is quite heavy enough as it is, being loaded with every weighty component but the passengers and the gas tank, so a heavier engine would pose a problem. Wear on front drive universal joints might well increase with more power, particularly in a car that so specifically asks to be hurled about. Yet we can't help but imagine an ID with a Corvette powerplant, or even better suited, an aluminum BMW V-8. What fun, and what a seller it would be!