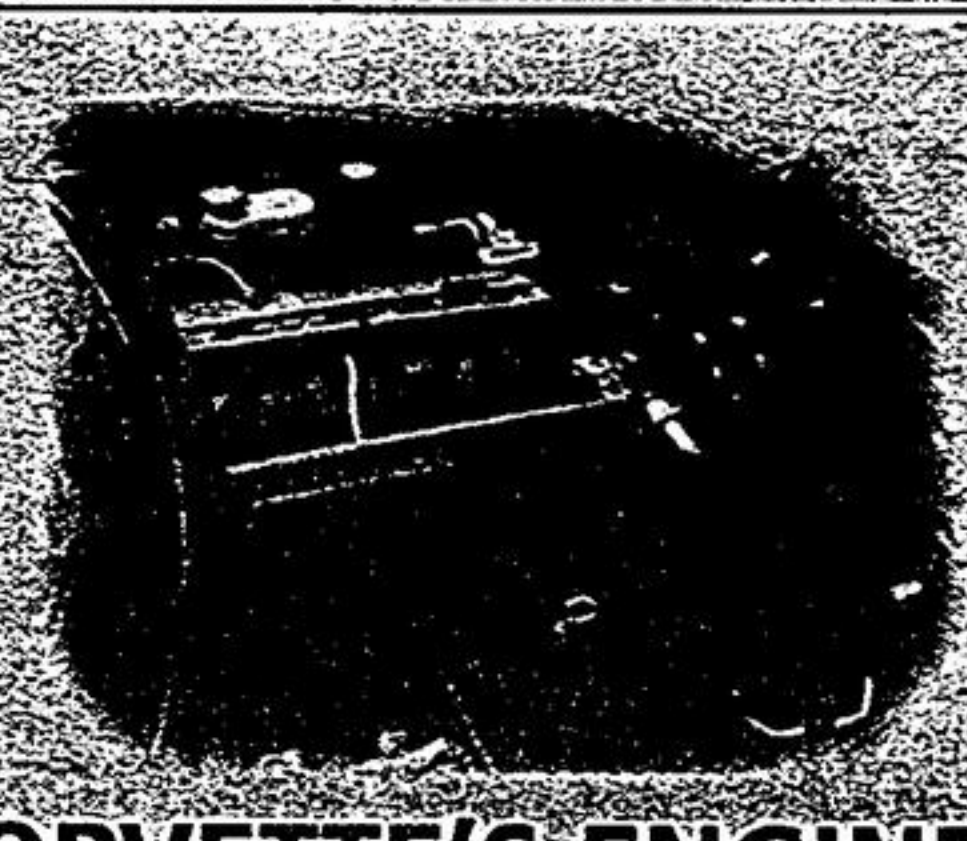


MORE 2005 CORVETTE
[PAGE 10]

WHEELS

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CORVETTE'S ENGINE
[PAGE 10]



This is the sixth generation version (or C6), the latest incarnation of the all-American sports car icon that has been with us for over half a century.

2005 Corvette is 6th generation icon of the sports car

Goal is to create a Corvette that does more things well than any performance car

by Rob Beintema

"Man, that car is you." I don't know how many times I've heard that joking version of the old sales line. But in this particular instance, it was probably something that every person sliding into the seat of the all-new 2005 Chevrolet Corvette secretly believed and/or wished for.

Of the all-American sports car icon that has been with us for over half a century.

"The Corvette represents a comprehensive upgrade to the Corvette," said Dave Hill, chief engineer of the Corvette and vehicle line executive for GM Performance Cars. "Our goal is to create a Corvette that does more things well than any performance car. We've thoroughly improved performance and developed new features and capabilities in

many areas, while at the same time systematically searching out and destroying every imperfection we could find."

The new C6 replaces the fifth generation model that debuted in 1997 but it wouldn't be unfair to think of this as an evolution of product rather than a revolutionary new concept, following the same goals and formula as the C5 - to provide high performance capabilities in a car that offers individualistic style, value and quality, with enough comfort for daily driving.

Yes, there have been changes. The new C6's dimensions have been tightened. The car is five inches shorter and about an inch narrower than the current car. Chopping three inches off the front and a couple of inches off the back gives the 'Vette a more aggressive wheels-to-the-corner stance, accentuated by

dramatic fender forms.

This tighter, taut profile is more than just visual. The new dimensions should make the car more agile and "tossable," with complimentary upgrades in handling, acceleration and braking. The wheels are bigger - 18-inch in front, 19-inch in rear, wearing new third-generation run-flat tires with the latest sidewall design and compound technology.

"The Corvette is more competition-influenced - given our championship experience with Corvette Racing - than any previous Corvette," Hill said. "Our goal was a performance car at home in virtually any environment. That means more than just raw performance. It calls for improved ride comfort, a precisely-built and technically-sophisticated interior, and a sleek new body that is fresh and contemporary, while still instantly recog-

nized as the new Corvette."

A lot of classic Corvette cues and influences from the last version carry over but there is one fairly significant shift in styling. This is the first Corvette without pop-up headlights (or air brakes, as Dave Hill has been heard to joke) since the C2 version back in the '60s. Apparently, so the story goes, early into the launch of the previous Corvette, engineer Hill overheard one woman's comment about the nice new car with the "old-fashioned" headlights.

This change to flush-mounted Xenon HiD lamps will no doubt stir some opinion and controversy among Corvette fans, who are as fierce in their allegiances as they are conservative about changes. And, frankly, the styling

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