

ROAD TEST

It only takes a single glance to tell you that, in the Consulier GTP, we're dealing with something other than an ordinary production automobile. From the slab sides to the cab-forward design to the handbuilt look of many of the pieces, there's no doubt this vehicle is far from the mainstream. That's precisely the way Warren Mosler wants it. It was his dream to manufacture a car that combined the performance of an all-out race car with the luxury and comfort of the best full-production sports cars. This vehicle, the \$58,900 Consulier GTP, is the fruit of this vision, and of the company he's created. Some 200 cars per year will be built, including about 18 convertible versions, at Mosler's Riviera Beach, Florida, factory (407/842-2492).

Mosler is no stranger to high-performance street cars; despite their many charms, Mosler was disappointed in

find in most race cars. Mosler wanted his car to deliver a reasonable ride, and a sensible amount of travel was the only way to achieve that end.

Given the exceptionally light basic chassis structure, lighter, smaller wheels and tires than the supercar norm could be selected. A garden-variety Corvette carries only two people, just like the Consulier, but since it weighs some 1100 pounds more than the GTP, it needs to carry a lot more tire to achieve similar levels of handling performance. It also needs a bunch more motor to accelerate all that weight. The Consulier, on the other hand, needs less

CONS

HARD CORE



the large performance disparity between those road cars and the real racers. It wasn't that the racers had something the street cars lacked—in fact, it was precisely the opposite. The racers lacked the ponderous weight of the road cars; lightness pays dividends in every aspect of performance—dividends that simply can't be had by any other means. Therefore, first, Mosler's car would be substantially lighter than other road cars. This was achieved through the use of a composite monocoque body structure constructed of fiberglass, Kevlar, and closed-cell foam. Metal subframes at each end of the cab carry the suspension pieces. The transversely mounted engine is carried amidships, just behind the passenger compartment. The geometry of the twin-wishbone suspension is pure race car stuff, designed for this application by race car builder Bob McKee; the major difference is substantially more wheel travel (about 7 inches at each corner) than you'll

thrust to accomplish the same level of acceleration. It's powered by a comparatively humble Chrysler single overhead cam 2.2-liter turbocharged four-cylinder engine. In the Consulier, this emissions-legal powerplant exhales through a less-restrictive exhaust system and drives the car's rear wheels through a Chrysler five-speed manual gearbox. Cooling is handled by radiators buried in the large rear spoiler. Peak output is claimed to be 200 horsepower at 5200 rpm. That's not a whole lot, but given the car's lightness, performance is impressive. Our particular test vehicle lunged to 60 mph in just 6.3 seconds and covered the quarter mile in 14.9 seconds with a terminal speed of 91.5 mph.

Handling numbers are solid, too: Our car snubbed down from 60 mph in a reasonable 137 feet and jinked through the slalom at 64.7 mph. The real story was at the skidpad, where the Consulier squeezed a remarkable 0.90 lateral g