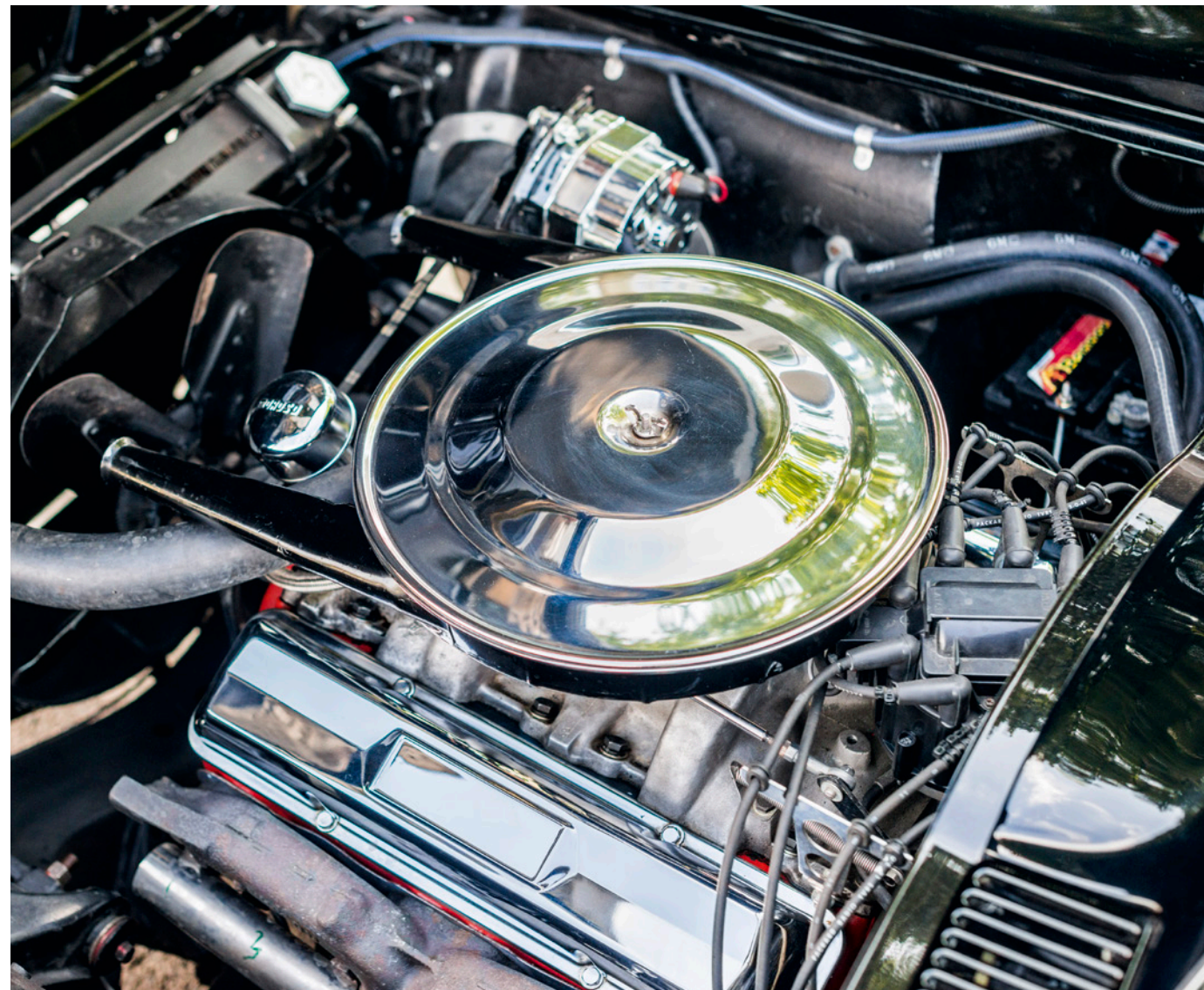


It was 1957, and Duntov had worked tirelessly to transform the Corvette into a world-class racing car, capable of striking at Europe's finest racers. To that end, he led the development of the Corvette SS race car, a dramatic entrant into that year's 12 Hours of Sebring. With Earl's blessing and the efforts of designer Tony Lapine—who would go on to design the Porsche 928—they managed to obtain a Mercedes-Benz 300SL chassis, build a tube frame mimicking it, stuff a Chevrolet small-block motor inside, and give it a dose of Jetsons-era styling just in time for a raft of carefully selected drivers to test it. Juan Manuel Fangio set a lap record around Sebring in it. Sir

Stirling Moss said that it was “bloody quick.” John Fitch reported, “the brakes won't live, and the damn thing is overheating.” In the end, the Corvette SS raced around Sebring, tortured drivers Fitch and Piero Taruffi with heat and bad brakes, and bowed out by the 23rd lap.

Yet, for Duntov, the ingredients of a world-class sports car had been laid out. Too bad the auto manufacturers of America didn't think so. That same year, 1957, the Big Three automakers instituted themselves a ban: no more racing or performance activities, period. All of Duntov's efforts quashed in a single stroke. Back in Detroit, Mitchell still believed that the Corvette was the key to unlocking a

*“UNLOCKING A NEW BREED OF CHEVROLET CUSTOMER: YOUNG, HIP, AND ADDICTED TO DRIVING FAST.”*



One could option their Corvette with a two-speed Powerglide automatic or two different manual transmissions (above).

The Corvette received a dizzying amount of engine choices, some which could only be ordered if you knew the right dealer (left).

