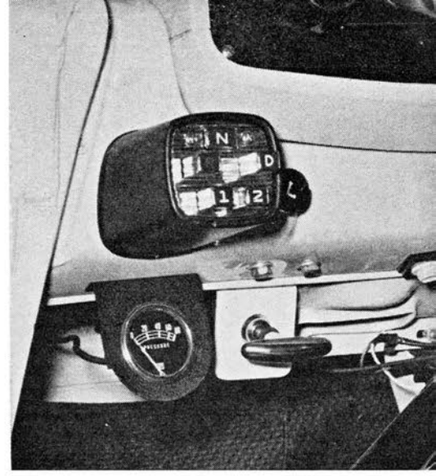
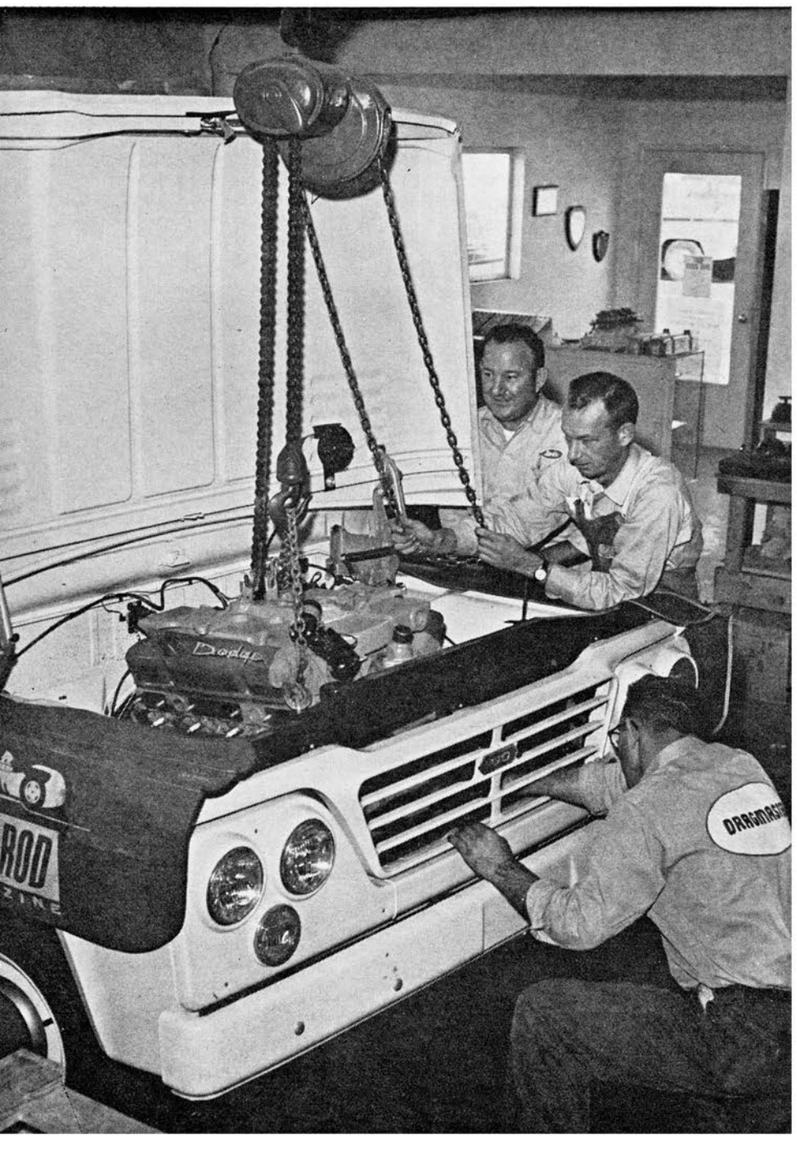
Quarter-Mile HAULER

Dubbed the Ram Truck, this boxy Dodge pickup is a real crowd pleaser when it pushes its way down the strip in B/FX class

The '63 Winternationals saw Dick and the Ram Truck turn a 104.98 mph with e.t. of 13.02 sec. This was good enough for second spot, and as it turned out, would have won the class if winner hadn't been running higher-than-stock compression.



T handle to left of steering column is the new parking brake. It connects to the TorqueFlite's park-lock mechanism.



text and photos by Eric Rickman

Radio KDEO, San Diego, Calif., is never at a loss for sporting news. If things get a little slow their news and sports department director, Dick Boynton, takes a run out to the nearest drag strip in his new Dodge-powered Ram Truck and racks up a record or two to liven things up.

Dick has had the speed bug since age 15, and has done some cycle racing in his time as well as a good deal of dragging at the old Paradise Mesa strip in San Diego. With a true hot rodder's philosophy and a bit of an off-beat approach to life Dick decided to go for something different enough to gain crowd appeal and at the same time have enough oats to get the job done.

A Dodge D-100 half-ton pickup truck with a box car profile was about as far into left field as he could get. When it came to supplying the oats he took the project up to the Dragmaster crew in Carlsbad, California. They suggested slipping a high performance 413 cubic inch Dodge engine under the hood.

The major problem encountered with this installation was not getting the engine into the vehicle, it was the weight distribution after this big mill was installed. Since the short-bed D-100 has only a 114-inch wheelbase and was designed for the slant 6 engine, things got a bit heavy up front with the big V8 in place. To get this weight to the rear where it would do some good, a few chassis alterations were in order.

The slant 6 engine with its Load-Flite automatic transmission was removed before beginning chassis changes. Nothing is ever wasted at Dragmaster. The Load Flite transmission is now in their slant 6 dragster. The quickest way to get weight transfer is to raise the front and lower the rear. Ergo, the front was raised 2 inches by placing 2-inch lowering blocks over the spring perches on the beam axle. This necessitated fabricating some longer U-bolts. The upper shock mounting hole was dropped two inches on the bracket. While they were at it, some much-abused old shocks were installed which will allow the front end to rise even further under acceleration.

Dropping the rear became a bit more involved. The front brackets for the rear springs were turned upside down and remounted in this position. A strengthening dimple in the bracket had to be cut out and replaced with a flat section of metal to permit unrestricted spring travel. The rear brackets were moved up one bolt hole on the frame. A new L-shaped bracket was bolted to the top of the frame to provide a bolting location for the spring bracket's upper bolt hole. This bit of juggling raised the front two inches and dropped the rear 2½ inches, giving the truck a nasty looking rake.

The engine chosen for this installation was a high performance Dodge 413 complete with TorqueFlite automatic transmission. The engine has the factory forged aluminum 13.5 to 1 pistons. NHRA rules permit the use of a Mallory Rev-Pol ignition and NGK spark plugs. Since there is quite a bit of room up front, getting this herd of

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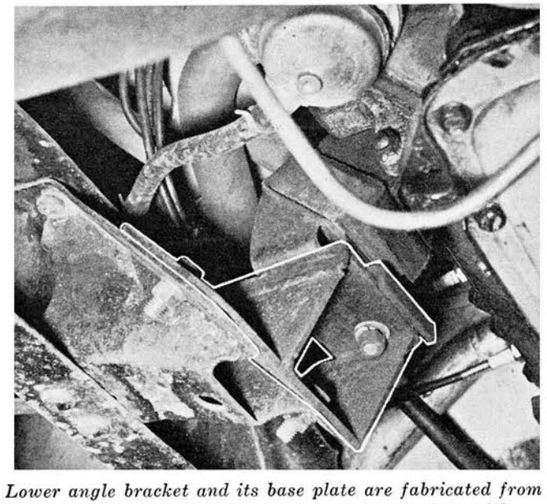
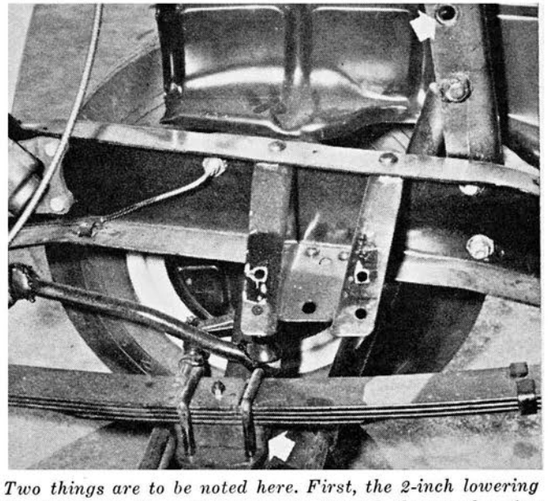
ABOVE – Dick Boynton, a disc jockey for KDEO San Diego, and wife Mary are quite proud of their B/FX hauler. Swing-up hood gets you right in there.

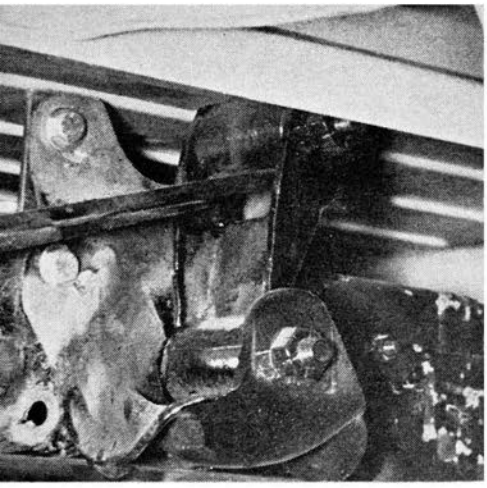
LEFT—Dode, Jim and Sidney of Dragmaster swing the husky, high performance Dodge 413 engine into place. The V8 engine's TorqueFlite is retained.



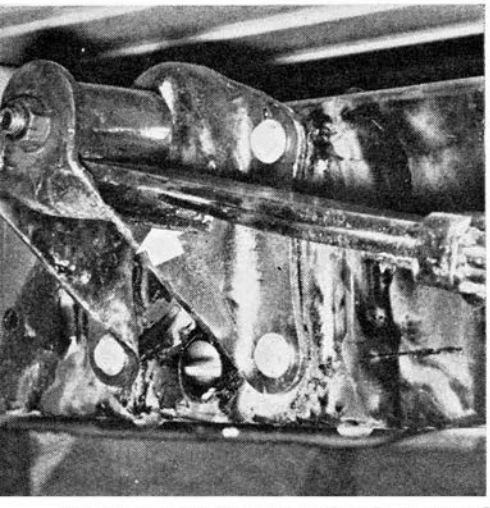
Lower angle bracket and its base plate are fabricated from 3/16-inch steel. Note base plate extends forward to pick up front hole in existing motormount on chassis. The stock V8 rubber-insulated motormount rests on the newly-made pad.



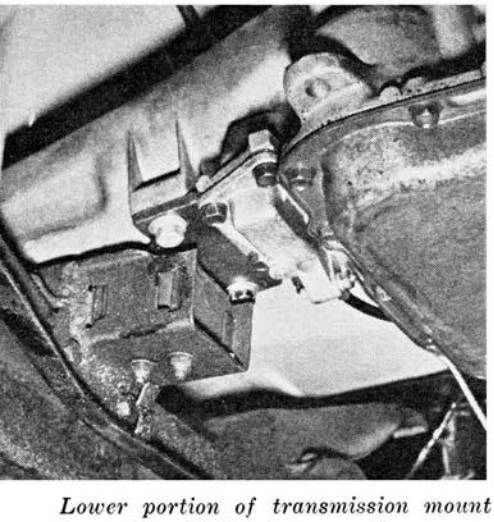
Two things are to be noted here. First, the 2-inch lowering block between the spring and axle. Second, the new location of the upper shock-mounting hole. The steering box is already well back and to the side. The motormount is retained.



Rear perch of rear spring, is raised one bolt hole on frame. Angle bracket bolted to frame provides new upper bolt hole. A 2½-inch drop is gained.



Front mount of rear spring is reversed on frame. Reinforcing dimple at rear edge must be cut out and filled with a flat section to give spring travel.



Lower portion of transmission mount has tabs welded to it to provide a means of bolting it to the crossmember. The member is relocated aft as required.

horses corraled under the hood wasn't too difficult. The V8 motor mount location comes out directly over the slant six mount location, so small adapting angle brackets for each side were all that had to be fabricated. These were made from 3/16-inch plate.

The stock radiator lower hose connection had to be switched to the opposite side. This radiator is large enough to cool the bigger engine adequately.

The rear ten inches of the inner fender panels were removed for two reasons, to route the Horsepower Engineering headers out to the side and to provide an escape for the hot air trapped under the hood.

There are two midpoint crossmembers in this model truck. The first consists of two bent angle-iron sections bolted to the chassis. The top edges of this crossmember have been trimmed slightly to give better transmission pan clearance. The second crossmember is removed to permit the installation of the transmission mounting bracket.

Since the TorqueFlite transmission is from the passenger car, the passenger car bracket was adapted to the truck crossmember. The lower portion of the mount, which contains the rubber

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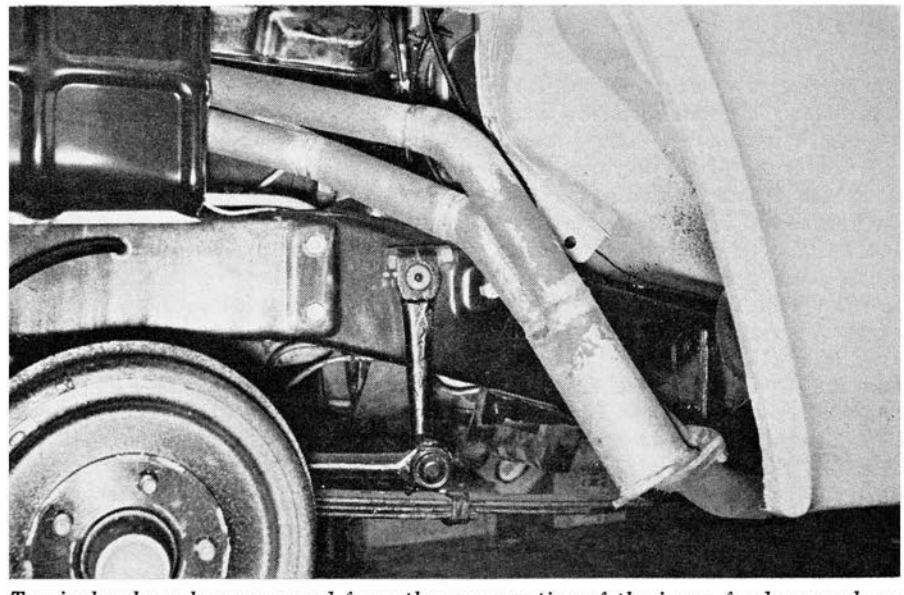
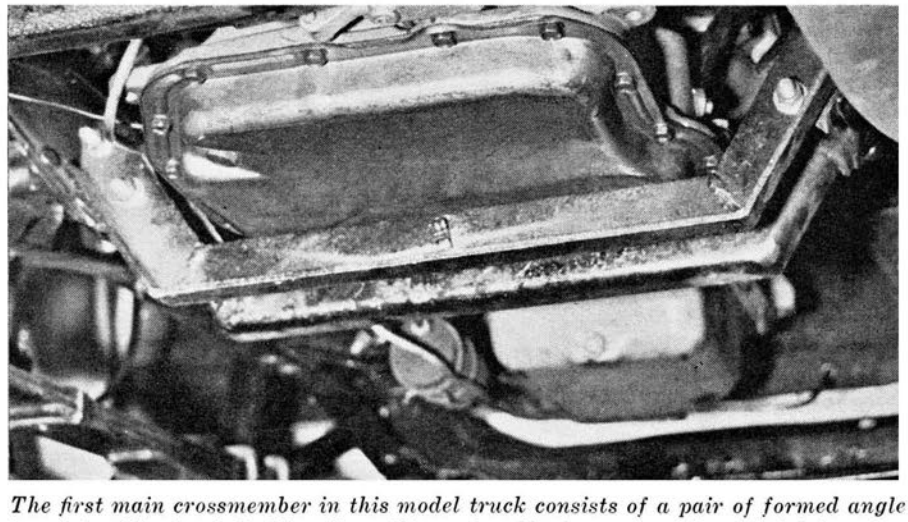


Ten inches have been removed from the rear portion of the inner fender panels on each side. This serves a dual purpose. It permits the Horsepower Engineering headers to be routed outside and over the frame, as well as letting the hot air trapped under the hood escape. Lakes plugs as well as street system are provided.



The first main crossmember in this model truck consists of a pair of formed angle brackets. They're bolted in place, it's no trouble to remove them and trim some material off their upper edges to provide some pan clearance. Brake line crosses under the transmission here. Relocation on floor pan over new trans is the best.

pad, needed small flanges welded to it so it could be bolted to the truck crossmember. The crossmember is now relocated in the chassis using the transmission support as a locating guide, and bolted into place. A good idea at this point is to reroute the brake line over the transmission and secure it to the floor pan. This avoids later brake line hassles if the transmission ever need be removed. The stock driveline was retained without any alteration. Traction Master torque arms were added to the rear end to prevent wheel hop. The truck's Sur-grip rear end will accept all passenger car limited-slip third members. This gives a really tremendous range of ratios. Eleven ratios are available as follows, 2.76, 2.93, 3.23, 3.55, 3.91, 4.11, 4.30, 4.56, 4.89, 5.12, and one even lower ratio is available on special order. Dick is running the 4.89 gears.

The truck axles fit the passenger car third member. Special nine-inch wide base rims are used mounting 9.00 x 15 M&H Racemaster slicks. Passenger car 15-inch 5-lug wheels are used on the front.

To feed the added horses it was necessary to install larger fuel lines as well as a Bendix electric pump at the tank. Line size was increased to ⅜-inch diameter; the stock fuel pump is drilled out to accept ⅜-inch fittings. The larger tube extends from the stock pump to a T fitting midway between the carbs, stock lines are used from the T to each carb.

Switching the transmissions created a parking brake problem. The Load Flite transmission setup had a parking brake on the driveline. To avoid having to change the entire rear wheel brake assembly, a fuel shutoff T handle and flex cable were installed under the dash and connected to the TorqueFlite transmission's park lock lever.

With a weight of 3735 pounds and 413 cubic inches the truck falls into the B/FX class. Since it must weigh this much to stay in class, weight can only be shifted, not removed. Being an FX'er permitted the use of fiberglass front fenders, hood, and door panels. This shaved 140 pounds off the front end which were then added, via an extra heavy crossmember to the rear.

Dick is a great crowd pleaser with his boxy pickup running against the FX 409 Chevy's and 412 Pontiacs. He has brought home more than his share of the trophies. The truck's best time to date has been 109.75 mph with an e.t. of 12.69. Dick took second at the '63 Winternational drags in the B/FX class. He was beaten only by a car that was later disqualified due to excessive compression.