COMETS OVER AFRICA

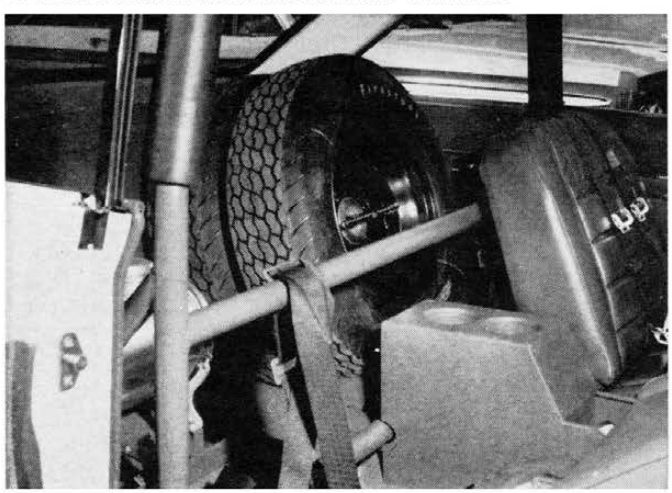
Preparation is Part of the Game

TAKING ON SOMEWHAT larger game, like the whole continent of Africa, those lean and hungry Comets which traveled 40 days and nights at more than a 105-mph average at Daytona Speedway are off to compete in one of the world's toughest rallies.

Five Comet teams have been entered for the March 26-30 event which will follow a 3100-mile figure-8 route centered about Nairobi, Kenya. All five will be driven by rallyists well-experienced in the East African Safari, and all of whom live in Kenya the year around.

Prepared in part by Bill Stroppe, Mercury's Southern California performance specialist, and Ford of Eng-

GENEROUS ROLL bar is "just in case," console stand for thermos bottles. Note windshield washer tank at left.



SPRING-STEEL skid plates extend back under engine and transmission. Extra lights are for foggy conditions.

land's competitions department, the Safari Comets are based on the same package as the Daytona Comets. Power will be the same 271-bhp, 289-cu. in. Super Cyclone V-8 which is optional for normal, production Comets. This engine has mechanical valve lifters, high-performance camshaft, 4-barrel carburetor, 10.5:1 compression and develops peak power at a rousing 6000 rpm. Torque is rated at 312 lb.-ft. at 3400 rpm. To utilize all this rpm, the Safari Comets will run 4.57 rear axle ratios, with 7.60-15 tires, which will hold top speed to around 100-110 mph but provide acres of power at lesser velocities.

Also getting a workout in this event will be the Ford Motor Company's new 4-speed transmission, which has ratios of 2.32—1st, 1.69—2nd and 1.29—3rd.

The chassis and running gear came in for a great deal of preparation (because only seven of 84 starters finished last year), mostly as precaution against the miserable conditions found on this rally. Heavy-duty springs, shock absorbers, radiators, anti-roll bars, axles, front spindles and radius rods are cheap insurance. Skid plates under engine and transmission protect those units from the rocks.

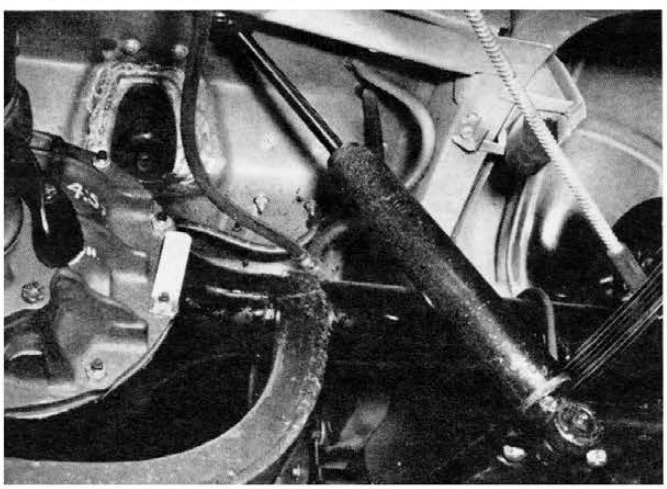
CO-DRIVER demonstrates his position when the driver calls for more traction; step plates on the bumper and handles on the deck help him keep his balance.

A 22-gal. auxiliary fuel tank, with transfer valves, is fitted into the trunk of each car, and the original 20-gal. tank covered with fiberglass for further protection against those rocks. Another 3-gal. tank holds windshield washer fluid.

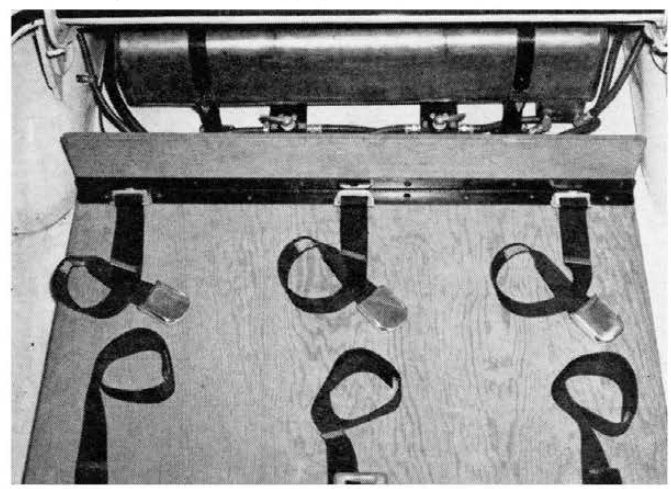
Brakes are 11 x 3-in. in front, 11 x 2.5 in the rear, with metallic linings. Drums are drilled at their periphery to permit drainage of water.

Special equipment for the drivers includes complete instrumentation, toggle switches for lights and windshield washer on the co-driver's side, auxiliary and fog lights, and a special "warble" horn to shoo off animals. ■

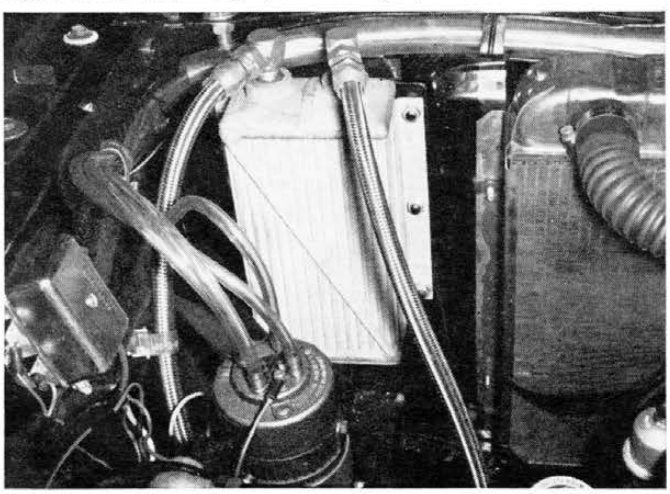
HEAVY DUTY springs, shock absorbers are used at rear. Projection over differential is electric fuel pump.



TIE-DOWN straps and plywood panels keep trunk items from rattling around and damaging tanks and valves.



OIL RADIATOR alongside water radiator helps keep engine cool during prolonged periods of high rpm.



METALLIC BRAKE linings 3 in. wide resist wear and fade. Front skid plates are made up like truck springs.