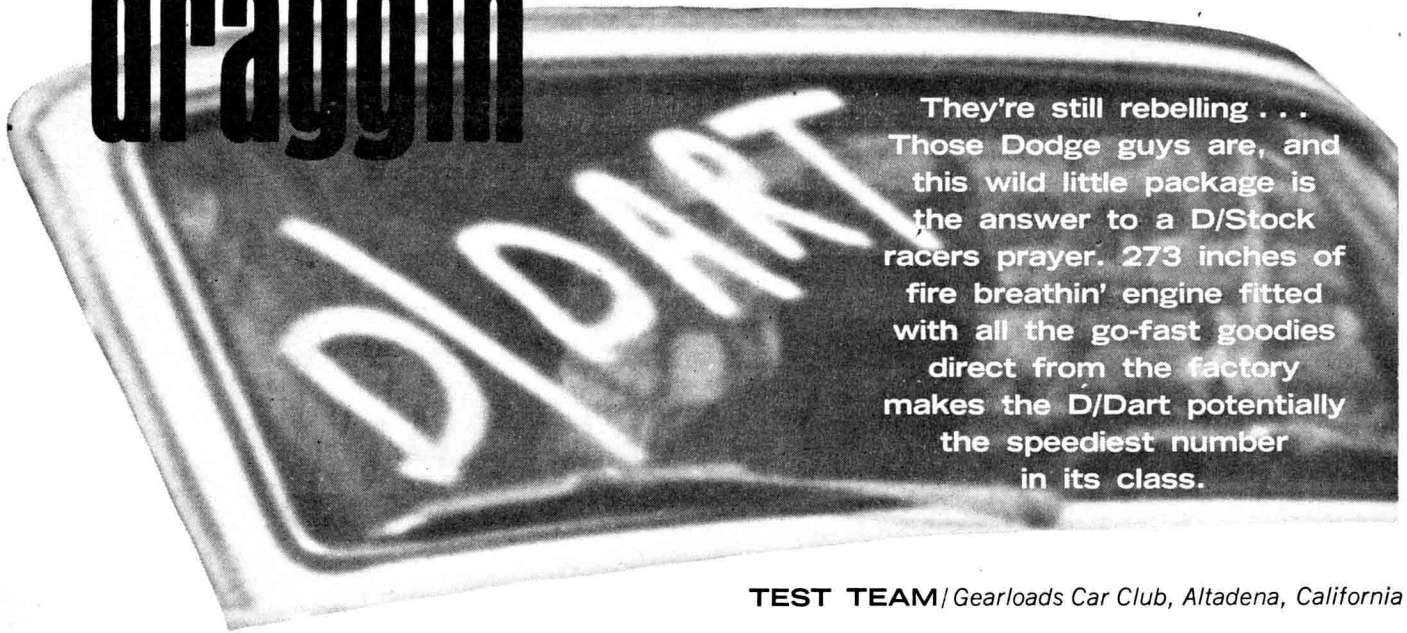


draggin'

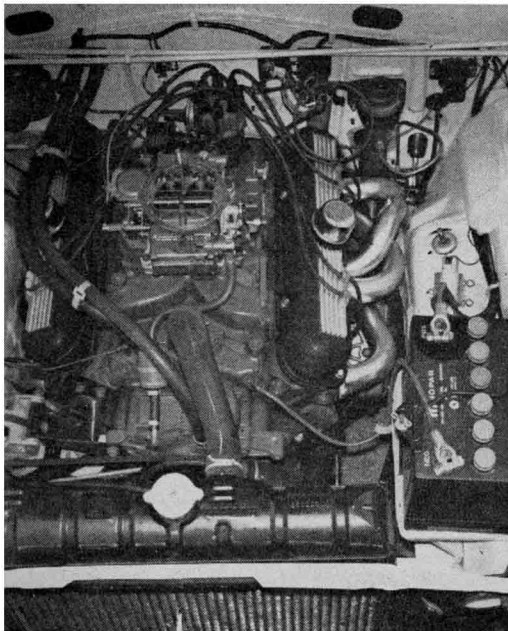


They're still rebelling . . . Those Dodge guys are, and this wild little package is the answer to a D/Stock racers prayer. 273 inches of fire breathin' engine fitted with all the go-fast goodies direct from the factory makes the D/Dart potentially the speediest number in its class.

TEST TEAM / Gearloads Car Club, Altadena, California

BY DICK SCRITCHFIELD ■ Weighing in at 2,946 pounds, as it comes from the factory and powered by a 275-horsepower engine, puts the new Dodge "D/Dart" about as close as you can get to the top of D/Stock class. From then on, it's up to the tuner. All the "good" stuff is already there! □ We picked up our test car and found that from the outside, it was little changed from the standard Dodge Dart GT that is so popular on the street. As you possibly know, the Dart comes in three series, the Dart, Dart 270 and Dart GT. A fourth has now been added, the "D/Dart." "D" in this case standing for D/Stock which means that the car must fall between 10.60 and 11.29 pounds per advertised horsepower to be classified in that class according to the National Hot Rod Association drag rules. When you stop to figure out exactly where the Dart falls into the class, you see that it was obviously designed with this class in mind! To do the mathematics for you, the D/Dart weighs in at 10.71 pounds per advertised horsepower. Pretty difficult for a factory to get much closer than that! □ According to Robert H. Kline, Manager of Service, Dodge Division, "The 273 maximum performance engine equipped Dart is designed for use in supervised acceleration trials and other

racing and performance competition. It is not recommended for general every day driving because of the compromise of all around characteristics which must be made for this type of vehicle." And he's right, on the street it leaves a little to be desired, but at the strip, LOOK OUT! □ The high performance Dart GT is only available in the hardtop model. The extra weight of the convertible restricts it from competing as favorably in the class as the hardtop. The only thing that appears different from the standard Dart GT is the full race sound of the exhaust as it pulsates out the single square tube, visible at the left rear of the bumper. The idle is something else again! The idle exhaust sounds like the "baddest" gasser at the strip, although considerably quieter when routed through the mufflers, and it smooths right out when you put your foot into it. Here's where driving the "D" on the street becomes a bit un-nerving. Getting a smooth start by feather-footing gets you a series of jerks until the rpm picks up a thousand or so. Too much gas, and you burn the tires. With a little practice however, you learn just where the rpm needs to go so that everyone at the signal doesn't give you those down-the-nose side glances as you jog away. □ Our Test Team came from



Left—Why mess around doin' all engine work by yourself? The D/Dart comes with most of it already done and ready to go racing. Healthy 273 includes Doug's Headers, "wild" cam, big Holley 4 throat.

Below—You'd never know it was a racer. This is the appearance of Dart which is based on same lines as standard models. For test, popular Cragar wheels were added all 'round with Eliminator tires on back.

Right—Testers and veteran West Coast match racer Charlie Allen discuss performance of Dart which in practically untuned form was unreal. Allen hit 14.33 e.t. & 94.22 on opening test run. How's that?

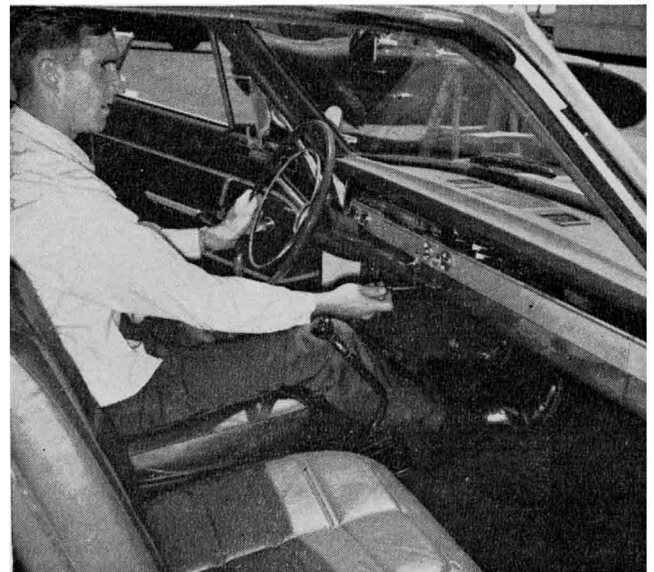


Altadena, Calif., just north of Pasadena. We discovered the "Gearlords" by attending a Reliability-Poker Run they were sponsoring a short time back. It was so well organized that we decided they just might be the club for our next Car Test. Club Prexy Jack Cudworth and the club's co-founder Ron Bray gave us some background. Formed in February '63 with six members, the club became affiliated with the Pasadena Car Club Association which is under the guidance of the Pasadena Police Department. Soon after their affiliation, they became active in community projects participating in annual Community Chest and Red Cross drives. In addition to car displays for charity and other good-will building events, they helped during the New Years season by driving floats in Pasadena's famed Tournament of Roses Parade. □ The Gearlords were very enthusiastic about having a chance to test this new car from Dodge and swarmed around it like a flight of locusts inspecting every inch of the exterior and interior of this new GT. After a couple of laps around the car and a few bounces on the front and rear seats, Jack Cudworth explained that, **"One of the first things I noticed about the Dodge Dart was that it didn't have any special markings to let people know that it was the high performance model. Personally, I like the idea of the car looking like a standard Dart GT and making it a 'sleeper.'** Having it look completely stock, you'd be the one with a real surprise. I kinda like that surprise motif. □ **"I was very impressed with the head room. Usually, because I'm tall at 6' 3", I have a problem at that end. I normally can't sit up real straight in the driver's seat because my head will touch the ceiling or I can't move to the left or the left side of my head will hit the roof. In the front, there was a good five inches of clearance over my head, even enough to wear a hat if I desired. My knees are another problem, so it was good to see that whether I was in the rear seat or the front, there was no bumping into things. Although it's still a compact car in the true sense of the word, there's enough room inside for an over six footer. I moved the seat forward two notches and everything seemed to be right where you need it. □ **"One thing I felt could have been improved was the location of the trunk lock. It's hidden below the rear mouldings and difficult to find without completely bending over."** □ The Gearlords were anxious to have a look under the hood, so we obligingly let them see the "innards." Here was the first sign that this Dart was something special. Catching your eye right off was the wild set of headers, custom built for the factory by Doug's Headers. They are the latest of the "tuned"**

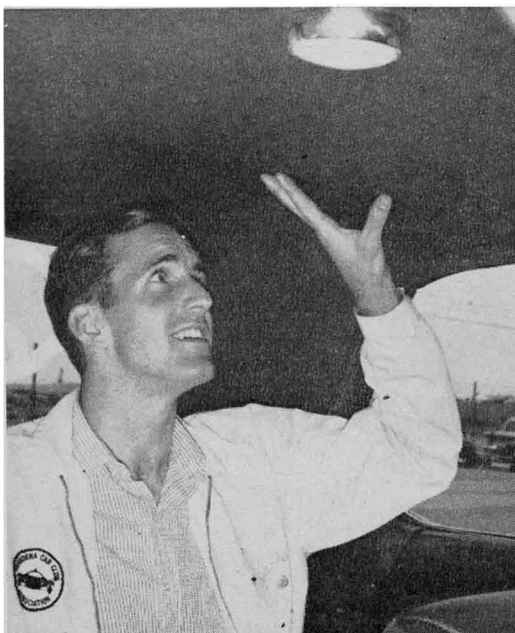


design and wrap around the steering column like a bunch of vines. I'm not sure how they get 'em in there, but it's obvious they'll never fall out! The headers eventually expire into a single exhaust system and terminate at the square tail-pipe extension. A very small, by today's standard, paper element air cleaner resides atop a big "hairy" Holly (4160) 4 barrel carburetor. An adapter has been placed between the manifold and the 1 11/16" bore carburetor, so don't expect the Holly to just bolt right on if you decide to "up-date" your Dart. A manual choke replaces the usual automatic, which eliminates that problem, provided you don't forget to open it. A special Camcraft camshaft of 284 degrees duration with .495 lift on the intake and .505 lift on the exhaust replaces the original bumpstick, lessening low end torque but making it up at the other end of the range. Racer Brown valve springs make sure the lifters follow the cam lobes. In order to fire the increased rpm's, a dual point distributor, minus the vacuum advance, is used. Weber Speed Equipment produced the clutch which gives a positive grab right off the floor. It took a little getting used to on the street, but was great for the strip. □ Richard Bray, who has been busy building a '29 roadster pickup had this to say: **"Engine performance was good, actually, out-**

(continued on following page)



Since Dart is designed for racing, one of the missing items is as automatic choke for big Holley carb. All control is of the manual variety mounted under dash. Pulls to any position.



Left — Even for 6 footers, there is still lots of both head and leg room, something that is almost absent from the compact models. No complaints in this section.

Below—One of the major faults found with Dart was position of the trunk lock. A good look and lots of bending is required prior to opening. Molding distorts view.

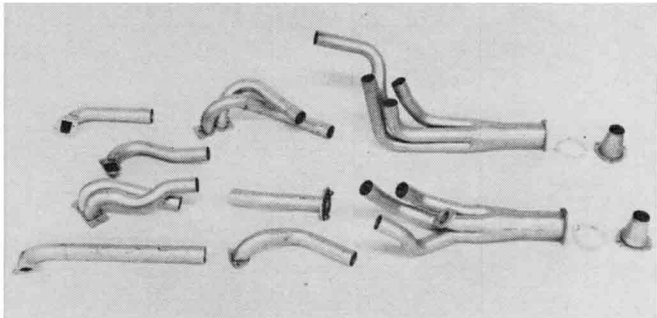
Right — Spare tire is located under trunk floor and lays in flat position. Covering is by means of a piece of fiberboard which is in turn covered with a light rubber mat.



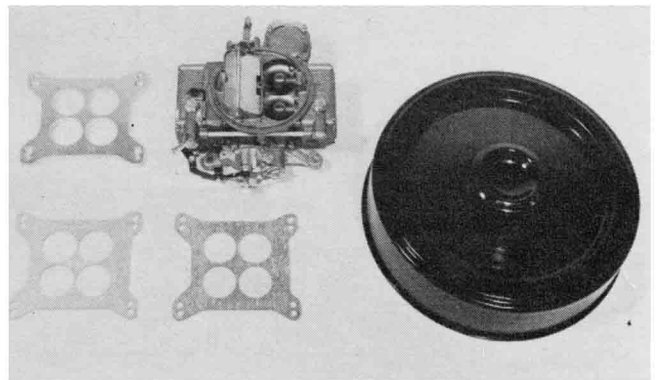
DRAGGIN' D/DART



Underway under full steam, at the Lions Drag Strip, Dart was rated as agile performer. With a few minor changes that can be easily made, machine's potential will better the 100 mark.



Special exhaust header system features all of the "tuned" features required for maximum performance. Setup includes many power producing features gained through dyno and drag testing.



With D/Dart package comes Holley 4160 carb which requires a special adaptor plate be installed on engine. Like many other options offered, you can buy this one from your Dodge dealer.

standing for a street machine! Granted, it's supposed to be a strip car, but if it can be licensed, you can bet it will find it's way to the street. Any young person that buys the car would use it as a dual purpose machine, and the way this one feels, it could sure hold it's own at the strip. Seats are comfortable and the Dart doesn't look like a stripped down or plain model like you might expect in a high performance car. I especially liked the data sheet that comes with the car. I think that every car, regardless of what it's set up for, should have one of these. It's really something the way it lists the tune up tips in detail and explains exactly what comes in the Dart Drag package. □ "The nut and bolt torque specifications are, without a doubt, the most complete of any outside of the factory assembly manual. I've looked at dealer maintenance manuals and they didn't seem that complete! If you wanted to hop it up further, it even tells you the proper way to do that without wasting a lot of money by trial and error. I don't know if the other manufacturers do this with their high performance cars, but my hat's off to Dodge for doing it!"

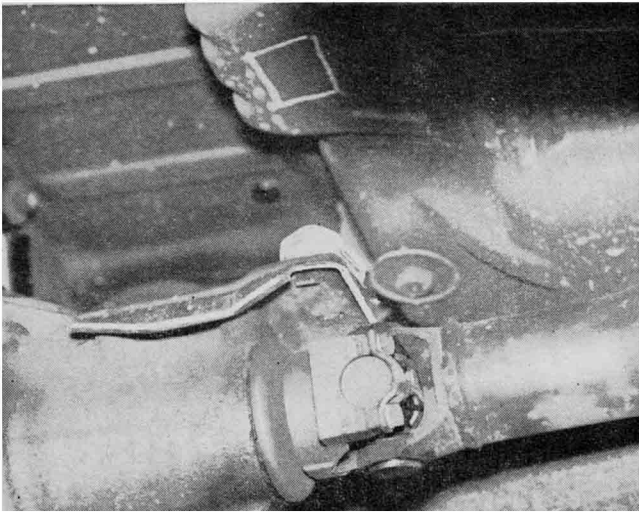


Interior was rated as comfortable. Here Gearlord Rich Bray gives the rear seat a thorough checking out in regard to quality which was found to be right at the top of the list.

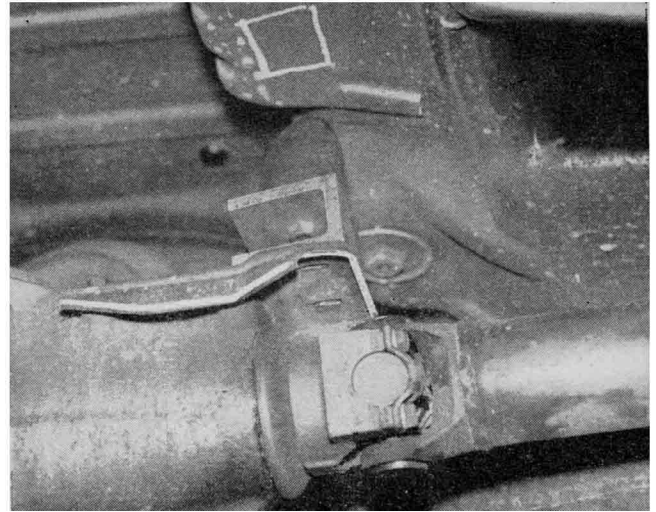


Prior to getting underway with test, Altadena, Calif. crew gives fact sheet on a car a through going over. Supplied by Dodge with each car is a complete and detailed packet of information which can be used convert standard Dart over to special "dragger."

Photos by Fred Enke

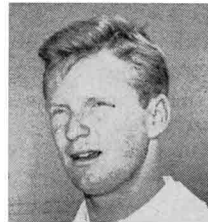


The stock pinion snubber, with car at rest, is about 3 inches from the floor panel. Under hard acceleration, this condition will allow severe "wrap-up" of the differential and springs.



To prevent this from occurring, a steel channel and longer rubber snubber are employed. When car is in a "static" position, snubber is "pre-loaded," that is it is in contact with floor.

The other members were quick to agree with Rich regarding the two information bulletins. Together, they total over 20 pages of tips and other bits of helpful information on how to make your D/Dart out perform the best of the competition. It also explains, with part numbers, exactly what is needed to convert your 235 horsepower engine into the new 275 horsepower version of the 273 V-8 engine. □ A point that didn't set well with the Gearlords was found in bold print on the first page of the data sheets. It explained that due to the expected use of the automobile, it is sold "as is" and therefore is purchased without any type of warranty. If the car was going to be used on the street primarily, this would be a little hard to take, but considering that the D/Dart is designed as a strip car, the manufacturer has to protect himself. □ A floor shift four speed is standard and provides ratios of 2.66 in first, 1.91 in second, 1.39 in third and 1.00 in fourth and 2.58 in reverse. Nils Holman thought that **"the transmission shifts unusually hard on the street and in some cases, is almost impossible to place in second and third when shifting normally. Shifting as you would on the strip was another story. Nothing could have been smoother with every gear moving exactly into place without the slightest hesitation. Usually you'd expect it to be the other way around! The shift handle was nicely located, being just where you would normally have your hand. It wasn't necessary to move way forward to go into third as is sometimes the case with floor shifts. However, it was apparent that this would be a difficult car to drive on the street until you were used to it. From a stop it lugs, and driving it on the street found a flat spot in acceleration in every gear which might have been corrected with better tuning and additional break-in. I had to stay in second and third much of the time when driving in street traffic, even with the high gear ratio the car comes with. □ "The Dart steers great for not having any power assist. It was just firm enough that you knew you were turning the wheel, none of this fingertip stuff!"** □ The standard rear end comes with a "Sure-Grip", 8¾" diameter, 4.86 to 1 heavy-duty ring gear which really gives you a jolt when the accelerator is smashed on the floor. There is nothing like a low gear ratio to make a car come to life in high gear at 60 mph! If you're not happy with the 4.86's, Chrysler Corporation dealers should have the ratio you need. Heavy-duty suspension and 6.95 x 14 black side wall tires mounted on the Barracuda Formula "S" wheels (14" x 5.5") also come with the car. For our tests, we added the new 14" Craiger SS wheels especially designed for the



Dart and a pair of Eliminator Prowler 8.00 x 14 street slicks for a better bite. The heavy-duty suspension includes special rear springs and heavy-duty shock absorbers providing improved wheel control off the line. □ One item that was discovered practically useless was the speedometer. It is unknown whether a drive gear is unavailable to match the 4.86 or if someone at the factory just goofed and forgot to match the speedo drive with the ratio, but it was a good 10 to 15 mph fast. At an indicated 75 mph on the freeway, everyone was passing us while they undoubtedly were remaining under the 65 mph limit. □ Ron Bray, Rich's brother, pretty well summed up the car for all the Gearlords. **"I feel it's the perfect combination car for both the street and the strip. For the person that likes to race weekends and needs the car to drive to work during the week, the D/Dart is the answer! You can take**



it off the dealer's floor and turn with the best of them in its class and even in the higher classes. Anyone who wants a high performance car is going to have to put up with rough running on the street and usually isn't that concerned. □ "I like the way the engine fits the chassis making it easy to work on so that you don't have to go up and under to get the plugs

and other items. One thing that did bother me was the rear end whine. The 4.86's made it sound like a quick-change when running on the highway. I can't understand how anyone could overlook the most important item in a competition machine, the tachometer, but the factory did. Sure enough, you're warned about over revving, but without a tach, how can you tell?" □ The Dart and Test Team were taken to the Lions Drag Strip in Long Beach where Charlie Allen was given a chance to run it through, factory "as is." Just in case you haven't heard of Charlie Allen, he runs a fiberglass reproduction Dodge Dart "funny car" with great success. Hitting low nine e.t.'s and speeds in excess of 150 mph, his purple terror has been the feature of drag strips from coast to coast. □ Straight "out of the box" so to speak, the D/Dart turned 94.21 mph in 14.33 seconds which was almost as fast as the street hemi, our test car, a few months back. The engine still had less than 150 miles on it, so the potential was definitely there. With a super drag strip tune up and a few alterations in the chassis department, the D/Dart should make the record lists. □ What did the Gearlords think? That the new high performance Dodge Dart GT was about the greatest thing that had hit the street in a truly, dual-purpose, drive-to-work, race-on-Sunday class winner. Better watch out for *this* Dodge Rebellion!

