

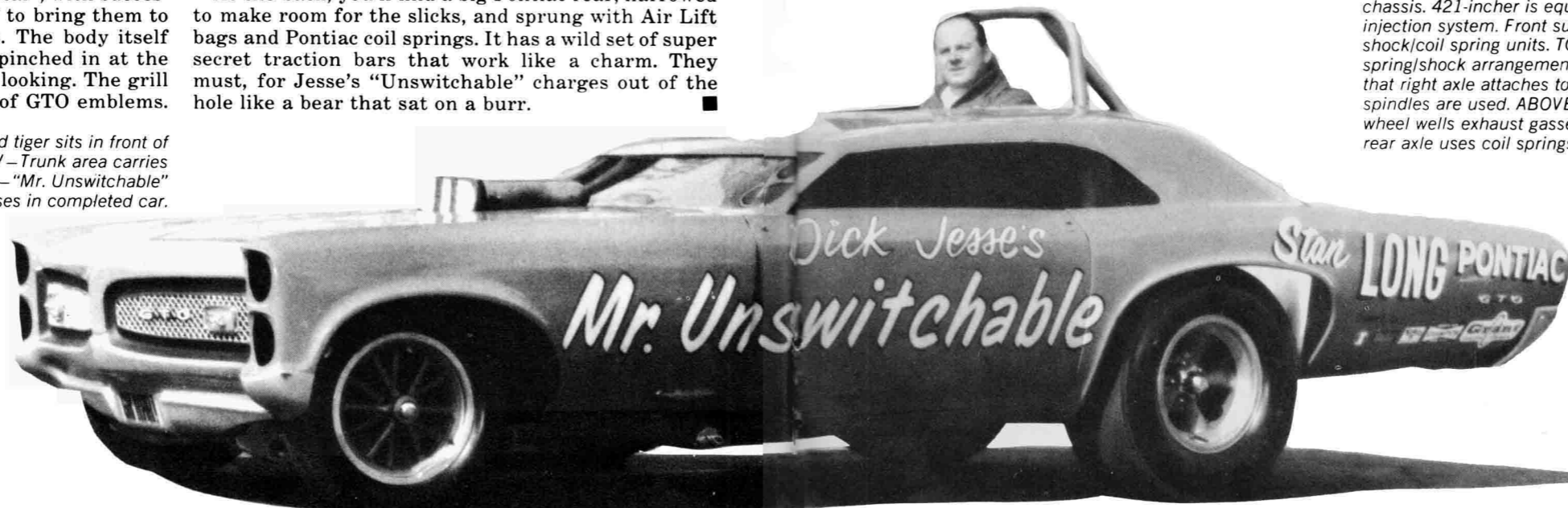
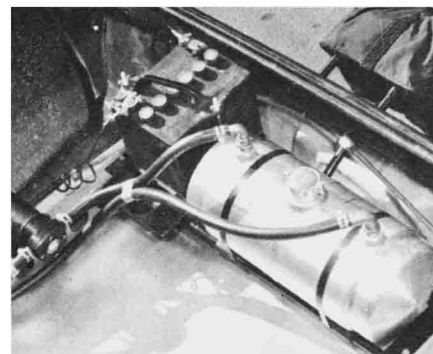


Story and Photos by Alex Walordy

THE LONGEST, lowest, and sleekest of the new Tigers lives in Highland Park, a Detroit area that was until now the sole and exclusive pad of the Mopars. Technically, the Mopars invented funny cars, but Dick Jesse's new Tiger certainly puts them all to shame. The pieces came from the wigwam of full blooded GTO's, up in Pontiac, but a stay in Dick Jesse's Enterprises somehow transformed it from the proverbial pussy cat into the real thing. Picture a GTO that has been raked forward, chopped and channeled to the point that Jesse sits with head and shoulders through the roof, with his sights set straight on the lights at the end of the quarter. Full credit for this masterpiece of a body must go to Dave Stuckey and Ham, two Detroit fender benders with talent that won't quit. We'll begin with an aluminum inner shell that fully encloses the driver's compartment. The trunk, wheel wells and firewall are also fashioned from aluminum sheet.

Outside of this driver envelope, Dave Stuckey and Ham wrapped a GTO body of startling proportions. At first they were going to go the all-fiberglass route, but the main body pieces were only available in sheet metal. The rest of the car, including a complete front end, doors and trunk are fiberglass. The planning for the main body shell was done in "metal", with successive cuts in the windshield and roof to bring them to increasingly lower and flatter lines. The body itself came down in stages and was also pinched in at the bottom, making it increasingly wild looking. The grill insert is stock, and so are a couple of GTO emblems.

TOP OF PAGE—Jesse's partially completed tiger sits in front of his Highland Park, Michigan, shop. BELOW—Trunk area carries water tank, water pump and battery. RIGHT—"Mr. Unswitchable" himself, Dick Jesse, poses in completed car.



The rest is pure Jesse, Stuckey and Ham. Yet, no one casting a first glance at the "Unswitchable" will doubt for a moment that it is a GTO, a major drawing card at any race track.

For power, Jesse picked a 421 Pontiac mill that dates back to the days when GM brass didn't frown on racing. However, except for the rods and block, there is little that remained stock. The heads are Mondello, the crank came from Crankshaft Company, and the pistons from Mickey Thompson. Add to this a set of Grant rings to hold 6-71 blower pressure and a Hilborn bug catcher to top the whole thing. Jesse is looking into the possibility of switching to the new 428 Pontiac mill, because valve sizes are equivalent and the combustion chambers much superior.

The headers themselves are fairly conventional, but they blow into the biggest set of pipes you have ever laid eyes on. They discharge the exhaust at the slicks just in time to keep them hot and clean. Exhaust and tire smoke then leave through a pair of kingsized openings flanking the trunk deck and roof of the GTO. On the first try out of the engine, some unburned fuel lit up and a seamed version of these pipes promptly exploded. Now the pipes are made of sturdier stuff, and at night they project quite a stream of fire and smoke.

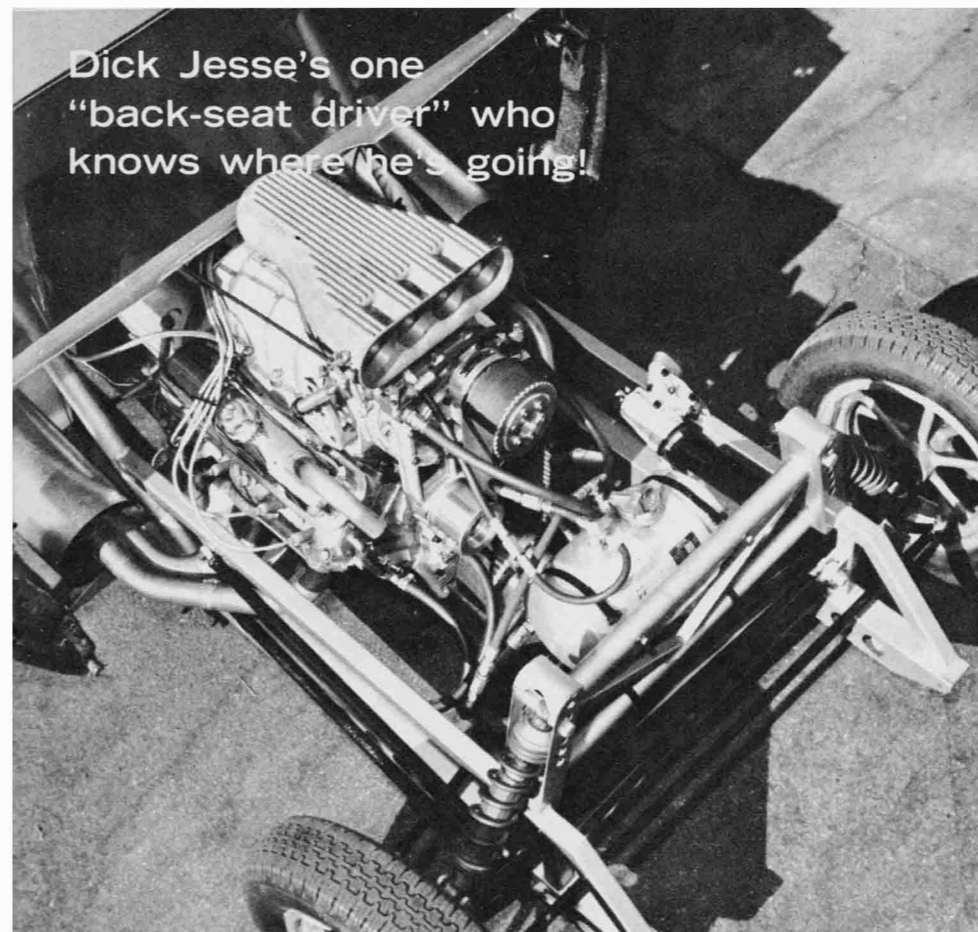
The transmission is a Turbo Hydramatic set up by Transmission Associates working with Highland Park Transmission. It's hard shifting race version of the stock late model Turbo Hydramatic and would couple up directly to a late model 428 if Jesse decides to switch.

The elaborate chassis and roll bar cage is the work of Dick Jesse, Clarence Walters and Russ Baker. It is unique to say the least, and throws any old ideas right by the wayside. The front end has a pair of independent axles that extend almost the full width of the car. They pivot on the frame at one end, and are capped by a '47 Ford spindle at the other end. Pairs of radius rods guide the axles, and springing is provided by a pair of converted Monroe Load Levelers. Quite a few plus points result from this elaborate design. For instance the track doesn't vary much, and the wheels get away from the crazy tilts of a stock independent front end.

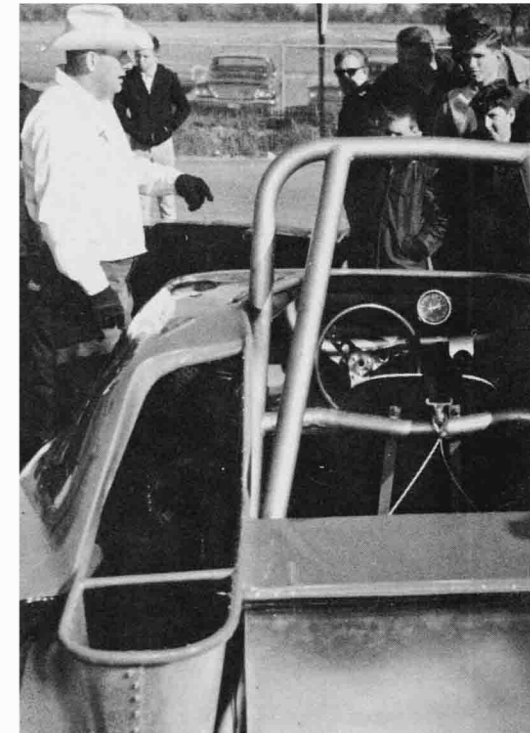
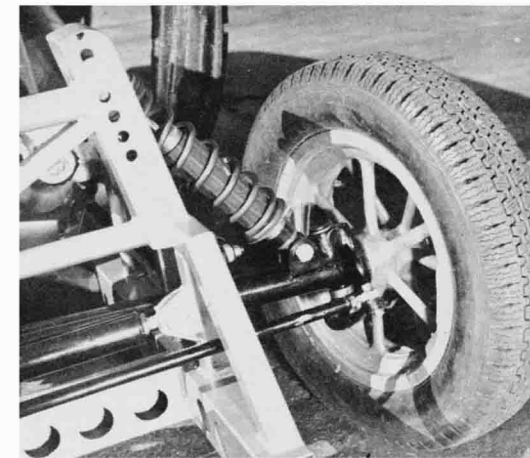
Also, there is ample travel for the front end, and shifting the shock mounting location helps pack weight into the right rear.

At the back, you'll find a big Pontiac rear, narrowed to make room for the slicks, and sprung with Air Lift bags and Pontiac coil springs. It has a wild set of super secret traction bars that work like a charm. They must, for Jesse's "Unswitchable" charges out of the hole like a bear that sat on a burr. ■

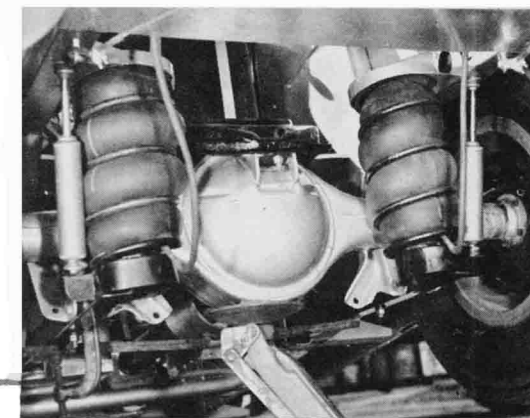
STOCKSTER



Dick Jesse's one "back-seat driver" who knows where he's going!



ABOVE LEFT—Supercharged Pontiac engine sits well back in special tube chassis. 421-incher is equipped with 6-71 huffer and Hilborn injection system. Front suspension is by a pair of Monroe Load-Leveler shock/coil spring units. TOP OF PAGE RIGHT—Close-up view of spring/shock arrangement. Two tube axles are employed up front. Note that right axle attaches to left frame rail in front of left axle. Early Ford spindles are used. ABOVE—Sturdy roll bar is welded to frame. Large open wheel wells exhaust gasses and tire smoke. BELOW—Narrowed Pontiac rear axle uses coil springs, Air Lifts, and center control arm.

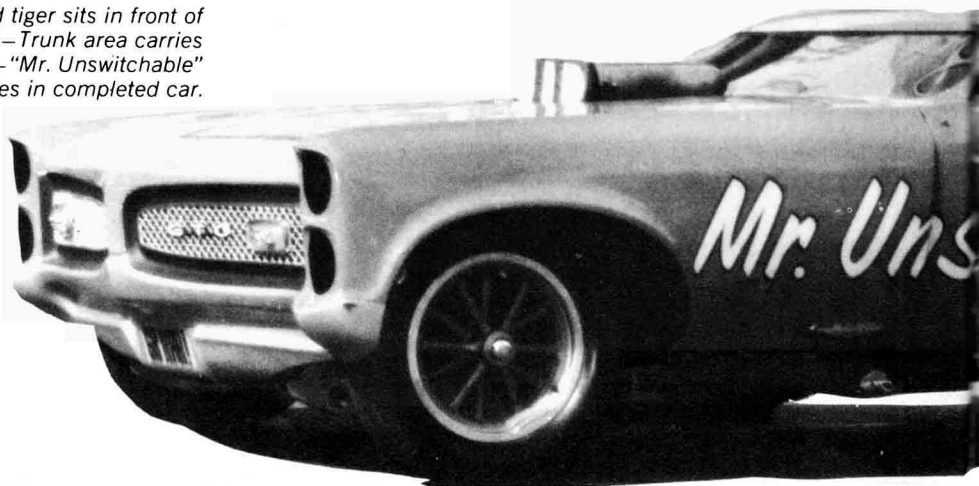
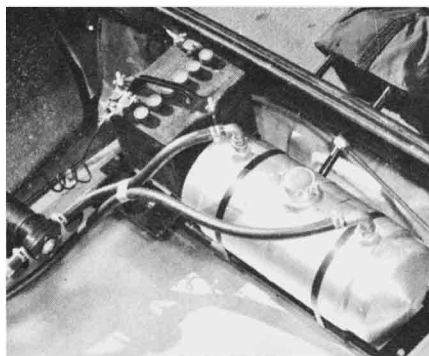




THE LONGEST, lowest, and sleekest of the new Tigers lives in Highland Park, a Detroit area that was until now the sole and exclusive pad of the Mopars. Technically, the Mopars invented funny cars, but Dick Jesse's new Tiger certainly puts them all to shame. The pieces came from the wigwam of full blooded GTO's, up in Pontiac, but a stay in Dick Jesse's Enterprises somehow transformed it from the proverbial pussy cat into the real thing. Picture a GTO that has been raked forward, chopped and channeled to the point that Jesse sits with head and shoulders through the roof, with his sights set straight on the lights at the end of the quarter. Full credit for this masterpiece of a body must go to Dave Stuckey and Ham, two Detroit fender benders with talent that won't quit. We'll begin with an aluminum inner shell that fully encloses the driver's compartment. The trunk, wheel wells and firewall are also fashioned from aluminum sheet.

Outside of this driver envelope, Dave Stuckey and Ham wrapped a GTO body of startling proportions. At first they were going to go the all-fiberglass route, but the main body pieces were only available in sheet metal. The rest of the car, including a complete front end, doors and trunk are fiberglass. The planning for the main body shell was done in "metal", with successive cuts in the windshield and roof to bring them to increasingly lower and flatter lines. The body itself came down in stages and was also pinched in at the bottom, making it increasingly wild looking. The grill insert is stock, and so are a couple of GTO emblems.

TOP OF PAGE—Jesse's partially completed tiger sits in front of his Highland Park, Michigan, shop. BELOW—Trunk area carries water tank, water pump and battery. RIGHT—"Mr. Unswitchable" hisself, Dick Jesse, poses in completed car.



The rest is pure Jesse, Stuckey and Ham. Yet, no one casting a first glance at the "Unswitchable" will doubt for a moment that it is a GTO, a major drawing card at any race track.

For power, Jesse picked a 421 Pontiac mill that dates back to the days when GM brass didn't frown on racing. However, except for the rods and block, there is little that remained stock. The heads are Mondello, the crank came from Crankshaft Company, and the pistons from Mickey Thompson. Add to this a set of Grant rings to hold 6-71 blower pressure and a Hilborn bug catcher to top the whole thing. Jesse is looking into the possibility of switching to the new 428 Pontiac mill, because valve sizes are equivalent and the combustion chambers much superior.

The headers themselves are fairly conventional, but they blow into the biggest set of pipes you have ever laid eyes on. They discharge the exhaust at the slicks just in time to keep them hot and clean. Exhaust and tire smoke then leave through a pair of kingsized openings flanking the trunk deck and roof of the GTO. On the first try out of the engine, some unburned fuel lit up and a seamed version of these pipes promptly exploded. Now the pipes are made of sturdier stuff, and at night they project quite a stream of fire and smoke.

The transmission is a Turbo Hydramatic set up by Transmission Associates working with Highland Park Transmission. It's hard shifting race version of the stock late model Turbo Hydramatic and would couple up directly to a late model 428 if Jesse decides to switch.

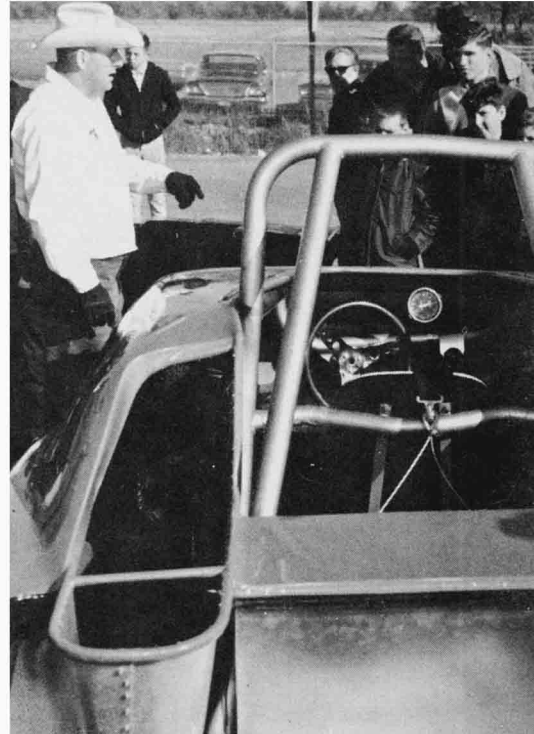
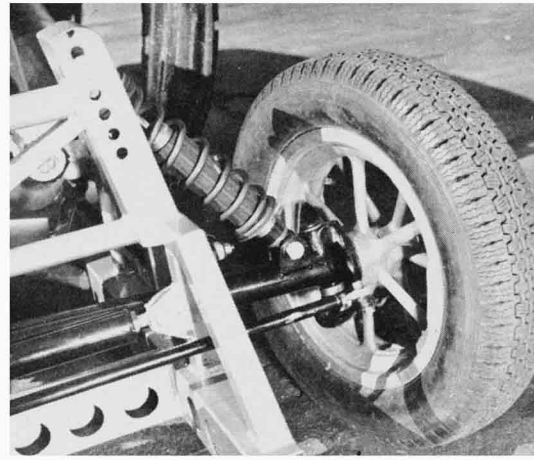
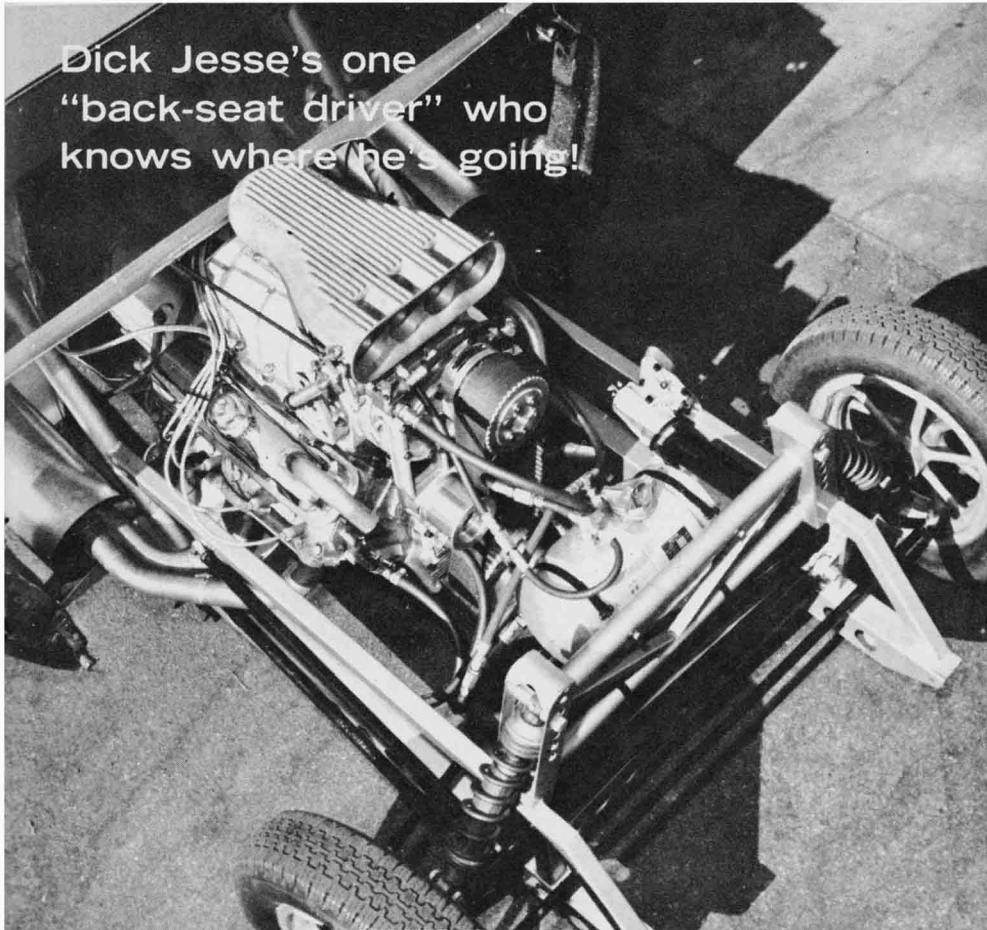
The elaborate chassis and roll bar cage is the work of Dick Jesse, Clarence Walters and Russ Baker. It is unique to say the least, and throws any old ideas right by the wayside. The front end has a pair of independent axles that extend almost the full width of the car. They pivot on the frame at one end, and are capped by a '47 Ford spindle at the other end. Pairs of radius rods guide the axles, and springing is provided by a pair of converted Monroe Load Levelers. Quite a few plus points result from this elaborate design. For instance the track doesn't vary much, and the wheels get away from the crazy tilts of a stock independent front end.

Also, there is ample travel for the front end, and shifting the shock mounting location helps pack weight into the right rear.

At the back, you'll find a big Pontiac rear, narrowed to make room for the slicks, and sprung with Air Lift bags and Pontiac coil springs. It has a wild set of super secret traction bars that work like a charm. They must, for Jesse's "Unswitchable" charges out of the hole like a bear that sat on a burr. ■

STOCKSTER

Dick Jesse's one
"back-seat driver" who
knows where he's going!



ABOVE LEFT – Supercharged Pontiac engine sits well back in special tube chassis. 421-incher is equipped with 6-71 huffer and Hilborn bugcatcher injection system. Front suspension is by a pair of Monroe Load-Leveler shock/coil spring units. TOP OF PAGE RIGHT – Close-up view of spring/shock arrangement. Two tube axles are employed up front. Note that right axle attaches to left frame rail in front of left axle. Early Ford spindles are used. ABOVE – Sturdy roll bar is welded to frame. Large open wheel wells exhaust gasses and tire smoke. BELOW – Narrowed Pontiac rear axle uses coil springs, Air Lifts, and center control arm.

