



Plymouth CHRYSLER
MOTORS CORPORATION

CUDA 340 STORMS THE QUARTER RIGHT IN FRONT OF NHRA AND EVERYBODY

PLYMOUTH TELLS IT LIKE IT IS.

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See test results

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Plymouth tells it like it is.

You're not going to believe this, but . . . we've got a car that gives away a hundred cubes to the big 'uns and still stays with them. It's the 'Cuda 340, and to say it moves is a masterpiece of understatement. In fact, as this is being written, a specially-prepared 'Cuda 340 has just won Stock Eliminator at the NHRA Winternationals with an e.t. of 12.93 and a top speed of 103.32 mph. And the driver, 17-year-old Mark Coletti, is the youngest guy ever to win an Eliminator title at a national meet.

Anyway, we've been running a series of acceleration runs at the Milan Dragway (Mich.) and Irwindale Raceway (Calif.) based on the premise that if you build the hot stock setup, your strongest way of presenting it is by simply giving everyone the straight skinny. No "advertise," no mind-bending adjectives. Just the facts, ungarished by creative heads.

The Basic Car

The model we tested was a 1969 'Cuda 340 fastback. (We also make a lightweight "notch-back" coupe.) This is what it carries—stock:

- High-performance 340 cu. in. wedge V-8, putting out 275 hp @ 5000 rpm and developing 340 lbs.-ft. of torque at 3200 rpm.
- Heavy-duty 4-speed manual transmission
- Hurst Competition-Plus floor shift with reverse gear indicator light
- Heavy-duty suspension
- 10 inch drum brakes
- High-performance dual exhaust system with 2 1/4 in. exhaust pipes, twin mufflers and 2 1/4 in. tail pipes
- Heavy-duty driveshaft and U-joints
- Heavy-duty rear axle
- Red Streak wide tread E70 x 14" tires
- Extra-wide 5.5 in. Safety-Rim wheels

The above makes up the 'Cuda 340 package, and you'll see that we changed it very little.

Equipment On Test Car

Our test car was equipped with an optional 3.91:1 Sure-Grip rear end, along with E70 x 14" "Polyglas" tires; power disc brakes; power steering; AM/FM; folding rear seat; and heater/defroster. Obviously not a "stripped" version just for dragging.

Modifications

So equipped, the 'Cuda would turn the quarter in absolute pure-stock condition—mufflers and all—then it would be torn down, inspected, then modified very slightly by adding an Edelbrock hi-riser manifold, Hooker outside-the-frame headers, and by substituting a big Holley 4-barrel carb. We could have gone further but the idea was to stick to simple changes the average guy could manage both financially and mechanically. No boring, no suspension changes, no slicks, we didn't even switch cams.

Professional Doubters

As in previous tests, we asked officials of the NHRA to inspect the car, man the clocks, and certify the times and speeds. Technical Director Bill "Farmer" Dismuke, Bernie Partridge, and Ron Root, all of NHRA, ran preliminary tech inspection of everything from weight to wheelbase. They tested the gasoline between runs (to make sure there was only gas in the gas). And, after the pure-stock runs, the car was torn down for a regular NHRA "Nationals"-type (i.e. very complete) inspection. The car read stock all the way.

The Test, The Driver, The Times

Our giant-killer eased up to the line with pro Ronnie Sox at the tiller and NHRA on the clocks. The christmas tree blinked its "soon, soon, now!" and in a screeching blur the little 'Cuda did its thing. Suddenly, there were smiles all over the place. Here's why:

Pure Stock Times

Driver: Ronnie Sox

Run #	ET/secs	Trap speed/mph
1	13.88	102.50
2	13.94	101.46
3	13.95	101.01
4	14.01	100.44
5	13.86	102.50
6	13.98	101.35
7	14.04	100.89

Average of seven runs: 13.95/101.45

Then, just to prove that even a talented amateur could expect pretty wild results, we had one of the ad guys from Detroit try his luck. Again pure stock:

Driver: Jim Ramsey

Run #	ET/secs	Trap speed/mph
1	14.29	100.11
2	14.22	99.88
3	14.35	99.33
4	14.34	99.88
5	14.39	99.55
6	14.34	99.33

Average of six runs: 14.32/99.68

Not bad for a first-time effort. And reason enough why everyone was smiling right into his sideburns. You don't even have to be superhuman to touch a hundred.

Onward and Upward

At this point the 'Cuda 340 was subjected to the "Nationals"-type teardown and a rigid inspection by NHRA. Stock-stock; no surprise. We reassembled the car and added the few bolt-ons mentioned earlier. Ronnie Sox took over and drove the car in "package" stock form.

Package Stock Times

Driver: Ronnie Sox

Run #	ET/secs	Trap speed/mph
1	13.48	106.50
2	13.43	105.75
3	13.42	105.26
4	13.41	106.25
5	13.41	105.88
6	13.33	106.50
7	13.38	105.63

Average of seven runs: 13.41/105.97

Suddenly, we were very glad the NHRA was along. Otherwise we'd be leery of publishing these times, afraid you'd think 13.41/105.97 was putting you on. But, allowing for variables in driving technique and tuning skill you can turn approximately the same times in the 'Cuda 340 you buy.

Goodies from Plymouth

What's more, Edelbrock manifolds and Holley carburetors are available directly from Chrysler. You can get all the tuning info' from us, too . . . free. Write to Performance Parts Service, Chrysler Corporation, P.O. Box 1919, Detroit, Michigan 48231. Or play *Shutdown!*, Plymouth's Super Stock drag racing game—just send \$14.95 (check or money order) to *Shutdown!*, P.O. Box 25209, Los Angeles, California 90025.

One more thing, perhaps the most important thing we'll say here. If you want to find out what your car will do, take it to a sanctioned drag strip. It's the only safe way, and it adds the bonus of accurate recorded times. So follow the example set by the pros, and we'll see you out there.

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