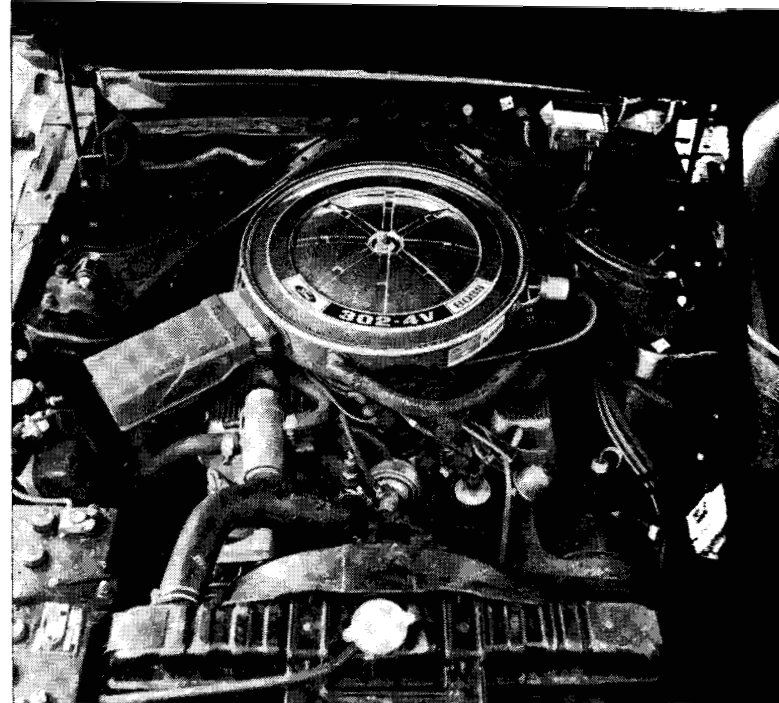




**INSTRUMENTATION** is complete, although the controls were hard to reach with the shoulder harness fastened.



**THE ONLY** Trans-Am engine still sold for the street, the Boss 302 is fighting out of its weight class here.

want the Super Drag Pak.

Inside the car, the Eliminator was all Cougar, and things got better. The seats—reasonable facsimiles of buckets—were comfortable, and the driving position was fine for most of the testers, who are all manner of sizes. The rear seat is occasional, the trunk space is

almost enough for short trips.

The instrument panel scores maybe seven on a 10-point scale. The tach is the best out. The engine only goes to 6000 rpm, so that's as high as the tach reads. No phony redlines, no 45° of sweep that will never see the needle. Well done. The other gauges are legi-

ble, and there are enough of them to make it an enthusiast's dashboard. The minor gripe concerned the location of the warning lights; so far apart that they were hidden behind the steering wheel rim. We didn't like the horn switch in the rim, either, but we've said that before and it didn't stop the fac-

## 1970 MERCURY COUGAR ELIMINATOR



### DIMENSIONS

Wheelbase, in.	111.1
Track, f/r, in.	58.5/58.5
Overall length, in.	196.1
width	74.1
height	51.1
Front seat hip room, in.	21x2
shoulder room	55.9
head room	37.6
pedal-seatback, max.	39.0
Rear seat hip room, in.	48.5
shoulder room	54.5
leg room	30.6
head room	35.9
Door opening width, in.	43.5
Trunk liftover, height, in.	29.5

### PRICES

List, FOB factory	\$3114
Equipped as tested	\$5048
Standard equipment included: Competition handling package, fast ratio steering,	
Options included: Eliminator package (\$130), Boss 302 (\$389), 4-speed (\$205), Traction Lok axle (\$207), power front discs (\$65), styled steel wheels (\$91), power steering (\$105).	
<b>CAPACITIES</b>	
No. of passengers	4
Luggage space, cu. ft.	10.1
Fuel tank, gal.	20/Calif. 22
Crankcase, qt.	4
Radiator coolant, qt.	13.5

### CHASSIS/SUSPENSION

Frame type: Unitized.	
Front suspension type: Independent short-long arms with drag strut, ball joints, coil springs, shock absorbers, and anti-roll bar.	
ride rate at wheel, lb./in.	130
anti-roll bar dia., in.	0.95
Rear suspension type: Hotchkiss drive, semi-elliptical leaf springs, shock absorbers, anti-roll bar (0.50 in. dia.).	
ride rate at wheel, lb./in.	145
Steering system: Recirculating ball and nut power assist.	
overall ratio	20.48
turns, lock to lock	3.59
turning circle, ft. curb-curb	39.4
Curb weight, lb.	3610
Test weight	4040
Test weight distribution (driver) % f/r	56/44

### INSTRUMENTATION

Gauges: 6000 rpm tach, 120 mph speedometer, trip odometer, 0-90 psi oil pressure, water temp, fuel level, — 60 to +60 ammeter, clock.

### BRAKES

Type: Power assisted disc-drum.	
Front rotor, dia. x width, in.	11.3x0.910
Rear drum, dia. x width	10x2
total swept area, sq. in.	231

### WHEELS/TIRES

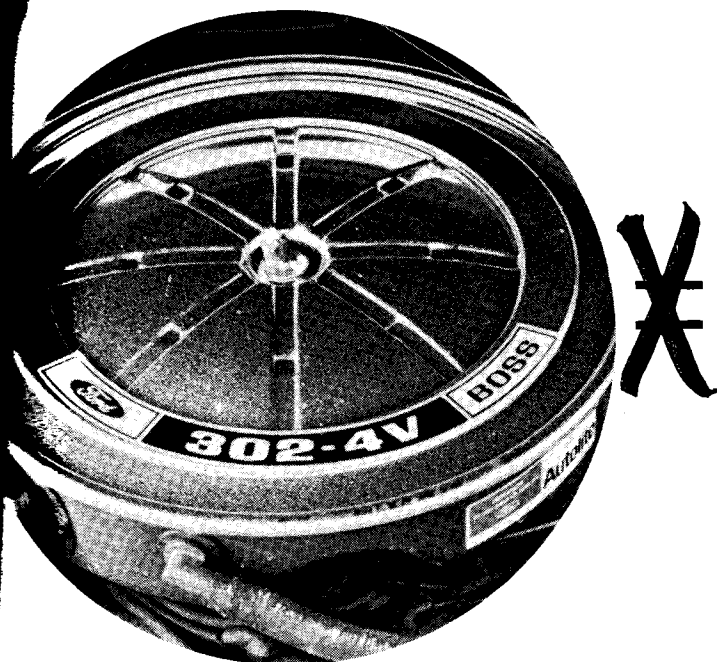
Wheel rim size	14x6 styled steel
Std. size	14x6JJ
bolt no./circle dia. in.	5/4.5
Tires:	
type	Goodyear Polyglas
size	F70-14
Test inflation f/r, psi	33/33

### ENGINE

Type, no. of cyl.	V-8
Bore x stroke, in.	4.0x3.0
Displacement, cu. in.	302
Compression ratio	10.5:1
Fuel required	Premium
Rated bhp @ rpm	290 @ 5800
equivalent mph	100
Rated torque @ rpm	290 @ 4300
equivalent mph	74.5
Carburetion: 1x4 Holley.	
cfm rating	780
throttle dia., pri./sec.	1.68/1.68
Valve train: Overhead rocker arms, solid lifters, pushrods.	
dia. in. int/exh.	
valve size	
cam timing	2.23/1.71
deg., int./exh.	40-80/84-36
duration, int./exh.	300/300
Exhaust system: Dual, reverse flow mufflers.	
pipe dia., exh./tail	2.5/2.0
Normal oil press. @ rpm	.40 @ 2000
Electrical supply,	
type/amp.	alternator/55
Battery, volts/amp hr.	12/45

### DRIVE TRAIN

Clutch type: Single dry disc plate.	
dia., in.	11.0
Transmission type: 4-speed manual, fully synchronized.	
Gear ratio 4th (1.00:1)	4.30:1
3rd (1.29:1)	5.55:1
2nd (1.69:1)	7.27:1
1st (2.32:1)	9.96:1
Shift lever location: Floor.	
Differential type: Hypoid with Detroit Locker "no slip."	
axle ratio	4.30



## ***But they don't belong together.***

drum down the steps of the Washington Monument. We would've preferred the 3.91 or even the 3.50 gearsets but, when you order the Super Drag Pak, you get the 4.30.

The low gearing put us awfully near redline (there actually wasn't a redline but the tach stopped at 6000) unless we stayed in fourth gear. If ever a car needed a five-speed, this car, with the 4.30:1 gears, did.

The drawback was that the car wasn't especially quick. The quarter-miles came up in 15.8 sec., at 90 mph. The Eliminator responded well to hard starts—didn't bog, didn't spin the tires needlessly, but that is no way to win any drag races at all, much less eliminate the competition.

It is true that the car had seen better times. We were last in line for it, and the earlier testing sessions followed that press day, so the car had been subjected to every heavy foot and calloused hand in the business. But on the press day, with one man and a pint of gas in the car, the quickest driver in the publishing world couldn't break 15 sec., not even with a crew of factory mechanics hovering over the little dear.

What it is is 400 lb. heavier than the Boss 302 Mustang, due, we suspect, to extra sheet metal and insulation provided to keep the average Cougar buyer happily apart from the outside world. (Which it would do, except for the noise of the whirring engine.)

So the man who justified the Lincoln-Mercury dealer's desire to have a hot 302 Boss to sell is going to get his scoop wrapped around his rear spoiler by the first Boss 302 Mustang who

shows up at grudge night. In order to coax enough go to put the hurt on, say, a 351 Cyclone, the Eliminator will have to put up with a gear ratio that a Fiat wouldn't wear to a slalom. And it uses gas, to boot.

There is a plain Drag Pak, by the way. It's a 3.91:1 axle ratio, and the engine oil cooler and a factory-type limited slip differential. So you improve mpg, cut down on noise and maybe the Cyclone wraps the...

And for a semi-final blow, the oil cooler is great for the wide open spaces. But in traffic, what air gets through those grille teeth is next hampered by the oil radiator, and the air doesn't make it to the water radiator. About once a day during the test period, the temperature gauge did a redlight and the testers looked for either a wide open space or a friendly gas station. (There was no oil temperature gauge, so for all we know the oil cooler isn't needed anyway.)

The competition suspension option is A Good Thing, no matter what the engine. Ford has expanded the suspension variations while the other makers have tried to make them go away entirely. The competition option isn't really, but it has the stiffer springs, larger shock absorbers that come with any handling package, plus a thicker front anti-roll bar and a rear anti-roll bar.

This last is on the spindly side, by looks. We put a thicker bar on our Boss Maverick, egad, but it works. Increasing roll resistance in back reduces understeer, the tendency to plow ahead when the road doesn't. The rear bar

doesn't cause oversteer, which is useful in skilled hands but takes some getting used to. It's just stiff enough to provide mild understeer, the proper trait for a fast road car. And the handling is quite good; not much roll, no odd habits like pitching over bumps or steering that changes with speed. The ride is firm, but not harsh, and it doesn't skitter on rough roads.

But the weight shows up again. The Mustang has the same system, but less weight. With more mass for the tires to handle and the springs to control, the Eliminator does not handle with as much control or develop as much cornering power. This would not be a drawback, because the option is worth having, but once again the Ford dealer came closer to meeting the demand for a Trans-Am replica than did his inter-company rival.

The baddest of the bad news was the locker rear end. Better not say differential here. This is a racing unit, and it does not differentiate, nor does it slip. The rear wheels are getting power all the time. Good, on the strip. Not really noticeably bad on wide corners, or ordinary highways with a bend here and there. But around city corners, it goes bump, bump, bump, as one wheel is dragged around by the other. And in the rain, as the bumps go in and out, the tires lose contact, and the car leaps sideways. You can find yourself making four corrections for each turn, wondering all the while if the tire industry knows as much about wet weather driving as they tell you. But it's not the tires, it's the locked axle. If you use the steering wheel for cornering, you don't