

Critics rave about Cummins-powered Ram pickups

If a Dodge Ram outfitted with the Cummins 5.9-liter turbo diesel engine were to race a Ford or Chevy truck up a Colorado mountain road, there would be no question who would win. The Dodge Ram would sail up the mountain, while its Chevy and Ford counterparts chugged along in its dust.

In fact, in just about any endurance competition imaginable, the Dodge Ram truck would obliterate its competition.

This is not frivolous hype or propaganda generated by zealous marketing types. The example is based on testimonials by industry trade journals.

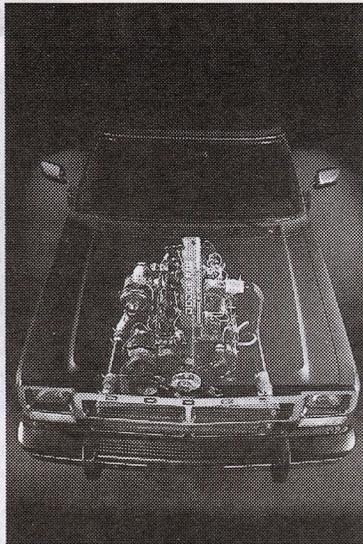
For instance, *Road Test Magazine* writes, "The Dodge-Cummins pickup outdistances its Ford and Chevy counterparts in every meaningful category."

"Dodgzilla" is a term coined by *Four Wheeler* magazine to describe the Dodge Ram pickup.

Why the acclaim? The engine powering the Dodge Ram—the Cummins diesel 5.9-liter six-cylinder turbo engine—has no equal, according to Paul Sheridan, Jeep®/Truck Engineering Engine Program Manager. It's the only factory-installed turbo diesel available in a pickup.

Referred to by Sheridan as the "Ferrari of the diesel engines," the Cummins is largely responsible for the recent success of Dodge Ram trucks in the marketplace.

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"We are approaching 50 percent of Ford's volume after only three years in the diesel business," Sheridan added. "Our problem is not demand, but supply of available engines from Cummins. We can't fill customer orders fast enough."

The 1989 model year production was sold by December 1988, and 1990 production sold out by February 1990.

"We can't determine how great the demand is, because we haven't hit the ceiling yet," Sheridan said.

A diesel engine survey found that if given the option, one out of four Ford and General Motors diesel pickup buyers would pay an extra \$1,000 for a truck powered by a Cummins engine.

The engine was first used in the Dodge Ram full-size pickup



Among the Cummins diesel team members who worked to ensure a smooth launch were, from left, Eugene Shensky, Product Change Analyst; Ken Scobel, Cummins On-Time Assembly; Walter Ralph, Vehicle Development Specialist; Troy Simonsen, Product Planning Manager; Greg Henderson, Design Aids Supervisor; and Paul Sheridan, Engine Programs Manager.

trucks in 1989, but preparations to modify a Cummins diesel for the truck date back to 1985.

Eight Chrysler employees, part of the core Truck Operations group, approached the Cummins people namely because at the time the company was "the only game in town," Sheridan said. Ford was getting its diesel engines through Navistar, and General Motors manufactured its own and purchased some from Detroit Diesel.

Chrysler provided Cummins with a Dodge Ram truck and the assignment of making a Cummins diesel engine that could fit into the chassis.

December 1990 Design Engineering/Manufacturing Cost Reduction Results

Cummins completed its assignment and the engine is now available in the Ram D-250 and D-350, both two- and four-wheel drive.

"We achieved this success over the years using a skeleton crew, minimal budget and a complicated but necessary release program," Sheridan said.

In addition to offering an engine intercooler to meet strict emissions standards, the 1991-1/2 model offers a four-speed automatic overdrive transmission that will boost the truck's current top speed of 80 mph and further improve its fuel economy and performance.

Digest

In the News

STANDARD & POOR'S placed the Big Three automakers on its CreditWatch list Jan. 9 because of a worsening economic picture.

Chrysler said, "We are, of course, disappointed... but given the difficult environment the industry is in, we can understand their concern. We know our minivans and sport utilities face increasing competition, but are confident that they remain the class of the field and able to withstand the assault."

Chrysler will have an opportunity to present its case to Standard & Poor's.

Innovation

AL BARRETT, Mark Huber, Mike Larson, Don McCutcheon and Jim Pitt represented Chrysler in accepting an award from the Society of Automotive Plastics for the company's use of plastic in body interiors. In conjunction with Entech, Rockwell and General Electric, the group developed a plastic bolster that saves \$18 per vehicle and 8.3 pounds in body weight. The bolster is used in the Eagle Premier and Dodge Monaco.

People

IN THE DODGE/WJR RADIO Quest for Excellence music competition, Beth Barley took first place and won a \$5,000 scholarship. She is the daughter of Lou Barley, a tool engineer from Chrysler's Mound Road Engine Plant in Detroit.

Communication