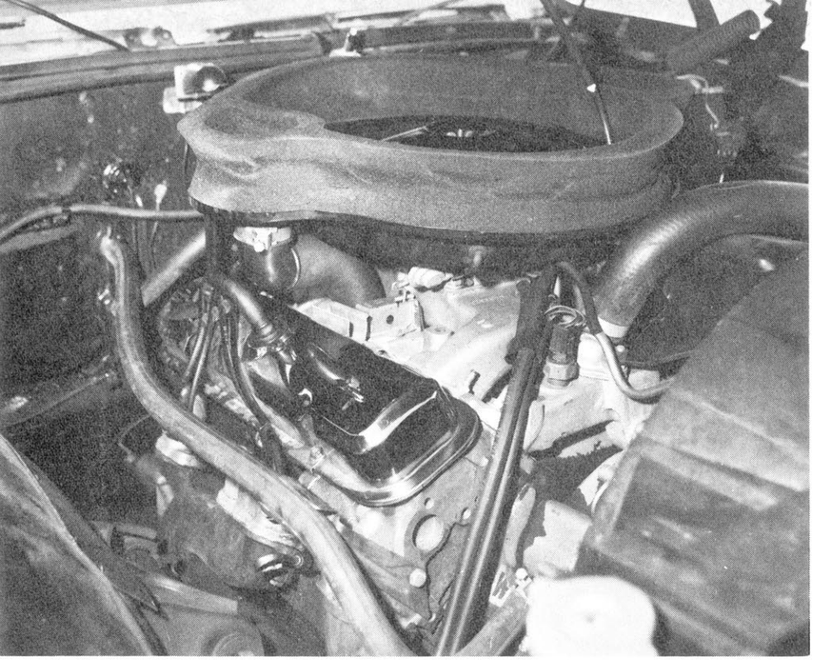
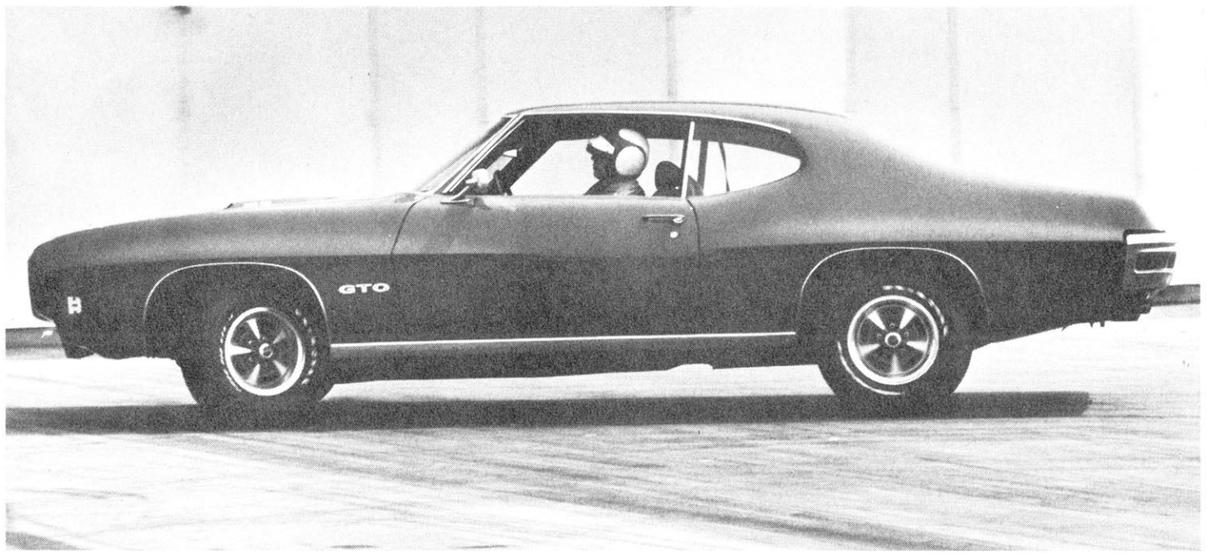


Here is Pontiac's trick for 1970; the Ram Air IV is available with the Ram Air V components by ordering the engine with the designation "Super Duty" on the option package.

performance test: RAM AIR IV GTO

DON'T LET THE COMPETITION GET YOUR "GOAT"!



The GTO handled great, but the real out of sight feature was bringing the car down from high speed without side-sway or tire lock-up. The brakes were superb.

It's hard to say whether the 1970 GTO is a step up from the run-of-the-mill pony car or a step down from a luxury car. In either case, the "Goat" is a deceptive half-breed. Since its inception in 1964, the GTO has changed images. It has become a loner in the field of modern-day super cars. POP ROD latched onto a Ram Air IV version of the GTO to see if there was any mysticism involved with the "Goat's" popularity.

Our test car was bright red, complete with a plastic Endura bumper, an exclusive with Pontiac. The all-vinyl interior had bucket seats (which gave good body support) and a padded dash; all of this made the driving environment comfortable. It could be that the interior of the GTO is the reason it lends itself to the idea of the luxury car image, as the quality control standards are kept high. It was also void of wings, flippers and those somewhat hideous stripes and out-of-place hero-words written over the bodies of most "status-conscious" super cars. The only markings on our test GTO were the words "Ram Air" on the hood scoop, and these can easily be removed if so desired.

The engine was the 400-cubic-inch Ram Air IV version and, like its predecessor, the '70 model has a Rochester Quadrajet four-barrel and an aluminum intake manifold with no carburetor heat. The carburetor heat is ducted underneath the intake manifold with a special crossover pipe. The cam also remains the same as in '69, with 308 degrees intake duration, 320 degrees exhaust duration, .520-inch lift and limited travel hydraulic lifters that allow 6000 rpm. There is one all-new twist to the new '70 Ram Air IV engine and it is a definite twist for the good. The bottom end of the mystical Ram Air V (that was never really put into production) is used in the '70 model of the Ram Air IV. That's right! The '70 Ram Air IV engine has the forged rods and crank from the Ram Air V, along with a set of aluminum pistons. Caution should prevail over anxiety, however, because this engine did not become available until the '70 GTO was in production for a time. So, when you order a Ram Air IV you can get the Ram Air V bottom end *only* by ordering the engine with the designation "Super Duty" on the option package.

The remainder of the equipment on the "Goat" included a Munice four-speed with a Hurst "T" handle shifter. The shift handle had a flocked finish on it, making some of our staff members a little reluctant to drive down the Sunset Strip alone after dark. The gear box itself contained a 2.20 low, 1.64 second, 1.28 third and a 1.00 fourth.

The rear end gear was a completely out-of-proportion 3.23-to-1, making the thought of quick drag times doubtful. But on the bright side, you can order the GTO with rear end options of 3.90 or 4.33.

With some very good power ratings for the 400-cubic-inch engine (370 hp at 5500 rpm, 445 ft.-lbs. of torque at

The large bucket seats were more than adequate and the entire driving compartment lended itself to the feeling of a luxury car.

Our best drag time was a 14.50 ET at 97.76 mph, but POP ROD feels that with the proper gear and tuning the "Goat" could easily run in the 13-second bracket. Trying not to break the Uni Royal G70 X 14 tires loose seemed to be the problem of the day.

3900 rpm and a 10.5-to-1 compression ratio), we headed for the drag strip.

As we idled up to the starting line for our first run, we noticed when the oil pressure is at idle the gauge dropped to zero. Pontiac assured us that this condition is normal, but it does make you stop and think. As we unloaded the clutch for the first time we realized that the car's preparation left much to be desired. The carburetor caused the engine to load up, and a burnt valve caused a popping noise about 100 feet out of the gate. Trying not to break the G70 x 14 Uni Royal tires loose and slick-shifting below the 5800 rpm mark, our first past through the lights netted a 14.64 ET at 97.71 mph.

Stopping was much more impressive then starting, as we brought the GTO down from above 100 mph to zero without fade, sway or lock-up. We should also mention that on the highway the GTO showed good handling and maneuverability.

After a cooling period we tried two more runs, knowing fully that the rear end gear was a definite disadvantage. Our second run was a resounding 15.06 ET at 98.10 mph. As we brought the rpm up to compensate for the carburetor that had been loading up, which turned out to be a hole in a vacuum line, the ET went up in tire smoke. Our final run showed only a trace of this car's actual potential as it ran 14.50 ET at 97.76 mph.

As we mentioned, only a portion of the GTO's real potential was shown by these runs. We feel that a good rear end gear (3.90) and some of the following tune-up tips the "Goat" could easily run in the low-13-second bracket. For example, try readjusting the limited travel hydraulic lifters. Simply adjust out until each one clatters loudly, then tighten the lock nut until the clatter stops. The addition of a set of headers would also help. For the Ram Air IV Quadrajet you can try .074 primaries for carburetor jetting along with a change in metering rods (Delco part number 7036671). Two other easy changes would be a set of drag slicks and a different set of plugs (Champion J-61Y) just for racing.

Looking back on the GTO test we see a very unique super car with quality built in and a great potential waiting to be brought out. So don't despair and above all, don't let any of those other guys get your "Goat".