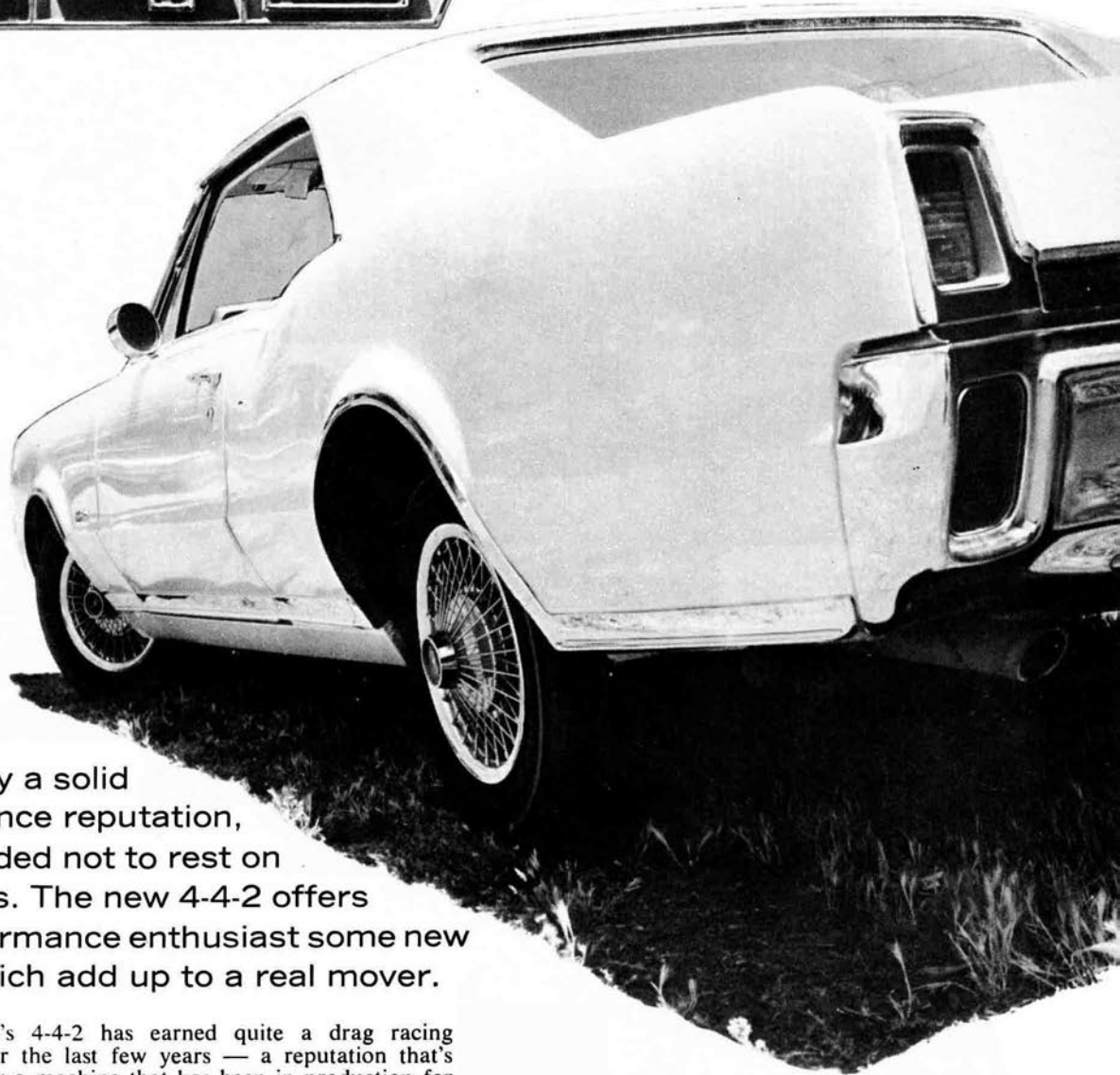


PERFORMANCE TEST

OLDS

4-4-2



Backed by a solid performance reputation, Olds decided not to rest on its laurels. The new 4-4-2 offers the performance enthusiast some new tricks which add up to a real mover.

Oldsmobile's 4-4-2 has earned quite a drag racing reputation over the last few years — a reputation that's outstanding for a machine that has been in production for such a short period of time. New to the package for 1967 is a drag version with 400-cubic-inch engine, single four-barrel carb complete with "heater hose" ducting to bring cold air from the grille to the carb, fiberglass fender-wells up front (also available on other Olds models) and such refinements as locating the battery in the trunk for better weight distribution.

Some of the performance items have their drawbacks, however. The trunk-mounted battery is bound to be the test of the gas station problems a 4-4-2 owner will encounter. We have a bit of trouble imagining our service station representative climbing into the trunk to check the water level. We have a hard enough time getting him to do it when the thing is right under his nose while checking the oil. But the idea of putting all that weight over the rear wheels is bound to help performance on the drag strip.

The suspension is also set up for drag racing and makes the car a bit touchy on the freeway. It goes like gangbusters

in a straight line, but those 60 to 70 mph freeway turns can be a bit rough.

Other than that, the 4-4-2 is a beautiful street machine. The looks speak for themselves and take second place to none. The only drawback is in the roof shared by Pontiac's GTO and Chevy's Chevelle. The extra-wide rear post makes for a blind spot that has to be watched with care. It's large enough to hide a hook and ladder fire truck.

Inside the Olds the driver is greeted by a host of easily visible instruments which give him a good understanding of what's going on under the hood. Although the tachometer could be bigger, it is accurate. Happily, there are no idiot lights to leave the driver in doubt.

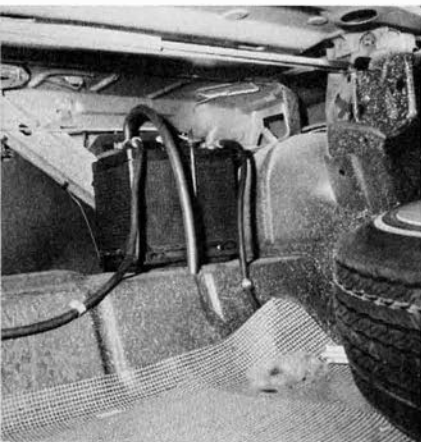
Seating is extremely comfortable. Our test unit had a power seat and, while we don't like power goodies that sap needed horsepower, we strongly recommend this option. Driver position is an often overlooked item in performance cars. In order to exercise the kind of good driving needed at higher-than-freeway speeds, one has to be a part of the car, not an added afterthought. The steering column is also adjustable and, when combined with the fully adjustable seat, makes for supreme comfort. It's also a nice idea for long trips.

Once at Irwindale Raceway for the drag tests we really fell in love with the 4-4-2. Rated at 360 horsepower and outfitted with an automatic transmission that shifted like a heavyweight knockout punch, we expected great things. Unfortunately, the car was held to a best of 14.26 seconds at 97.71 mph. The car was fully capable of ETs in the high 13-second bracket and speeds around 105 mph, but the transmission we had liked so much refused to shift on command from first to second. The shifts were positive, but

the point at which it shifted was up to the trans, not the driver. This could have been a factor unique to our test unit, but it should be checked. From personal experience, we know the four-speed manual trans to be a top quality unit, however.

With the go department well taken care of, we checked the "whoa" department. Our test car had drum brakes all the way around instead of the optional disc front, drum rear set up. After five attempts to stop the car from the near 100 mph quarter-mile speeds, the right rear brake began to smoke and the brakes faded to the point where we had to suspend our tests. Needless to say, we recommend the purchase of the disc brake option.

Overall, we were very impressed by the '67 4-4-2. Its acceleration was extremely good, considering the handicaps imposed by the transmission and the Firestone Wide Oval tires. Some cheater slicks, a set of racing plugs and a bit of dyno tuning and you'd find us at Irwindale Raceway on Saturday nights running in ET brackets. It's comfortable, easy to drive and the styling is clean and attractive. In short, it's a fun car of the first order.

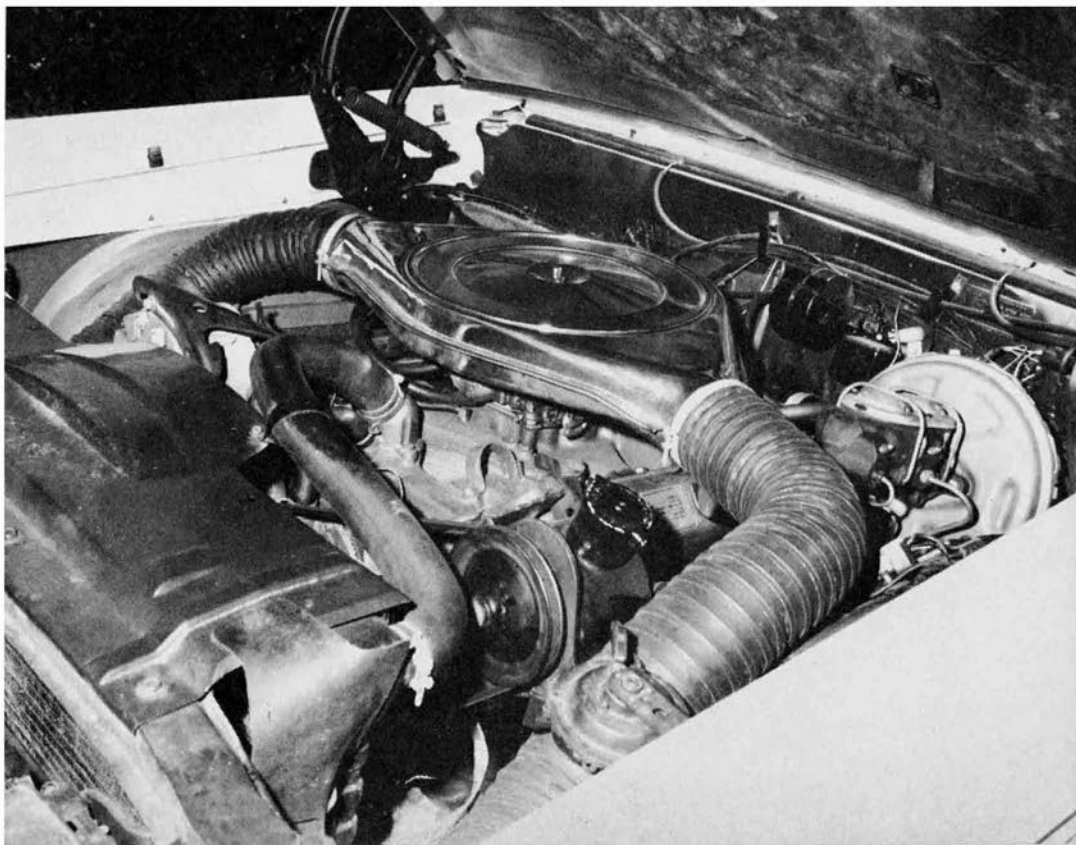


Battery is located in upper right-hand corner of trunk. Friendly service station attendants are hard to find when servicing this gem.

Healthy 400-cubic-inch engine boasts 360 hp, has fresh air scoop system. Fiberglass inner fender panels are used to conserve weight.



Located between headlights are fresh air scoops which are functional. Scoop outlets are attached by giant hoses to air cleaner.





Interior of 4-4-2 is smart and functional. Adjustable steering wheel and power seat make for excellent driver comfort. Instrument panel is well laid out, and absence of idiot lights is refreshing.