

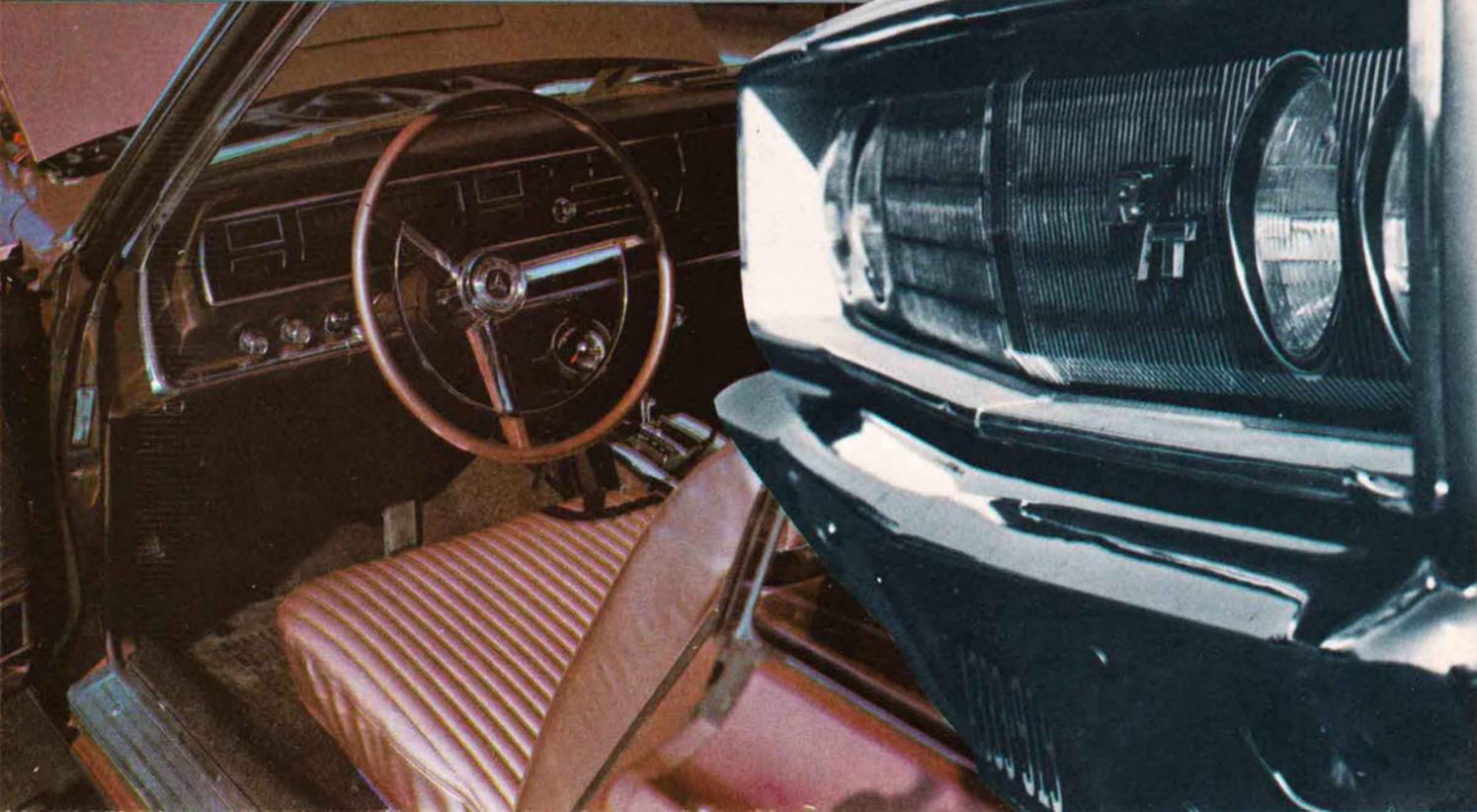


"WILD BILL" SHREWSBERRY DRAG TESTS the

'67 Dodge R/T



The high-flyin' pilot of the "L.A. Dart" comes down to earth for a ride in MoPar's latest street/strip machine — with surprising results!



IT ALL STARTED with the GTO from Pontiac back in 1964. A medium-sized car with a king-size engine and plenty of high performance options. And priced to appeal to the young, performance-minded auto enthusiasts.

Then Chevy offered a big engine in the Chevelle in '65, and also in the Chevy II in '66. Oldsmobile has their 442 which came on the scene in '65 to take a share of this market.

Dodge and Plymouth tried to hold up their end in '65 with the 383-cubic-inch Belvedere and Coronet but just didn't have the combination to bring home a win at the local drag strip against the tougher GTO's, 442's, and Chevys. But in '66, Chrysler Corporation unloaded a street bomb with their 426 hemi, available in the Plymouth Belvedere and the Dodge Coronet. In proper trim, this package took a back seat to no other car, could turn in the 13's in full street regalia, and made many a believer during an impromptu stop-light Gran Prix.

But for the average performance enthusiast the hemi carried too big a price tag. The engine and 4-speed trans cost an additional \$1,100.00. Just too much money to lay out for that extra bit of performance.

So for 1967, Chrysler's engineers sharpened their pencils and went to work to come up with a package that could be offered to the public at a competitive price to the other cars in the performance field and also show them their taillights on the drag strips. Were they able to do it? Well, at this writing the price is a matter of record and it seems they accomplished their goal in that department. As far as the performance end goes, we'll have to wait until all the other manufacturers have had a chance to get their machinery on the track and prove what they can do. But until that happens, it appears that Dodge's newest performance offering is definitely one of the hottest off-the-showroom-floor models we've seen.

The car that we have chosen for our drag test is the 1967 Dodge R/T equipped with MoPar's newest version of their 440-cubic inch engine. Dodge calls this mill the 440-Magnum. Although this is the same basic engine that was standard in the '66 Chrysler New Yorker and Imperial, several important changes have been incorporated. The R/T version has different cylinder heads, new manifolds, and a new camshaft to boost its output to 480-pounds feet of torque at 3200 rpm and 375 horsepower at 4600 rpm. The bore and stroke is the same at 4.32-inch and 3.75-inch, respectively. The intake manifold has been streamlined and enlarged by 10%, and teamed with 1/8 inch larger exhaust valves at 1.74-inches. The intakes are the same as last year at 2.08-inches. New design valve springs are used that have a seat pressure of 105-pounds and an open pressure of 245-pounds.

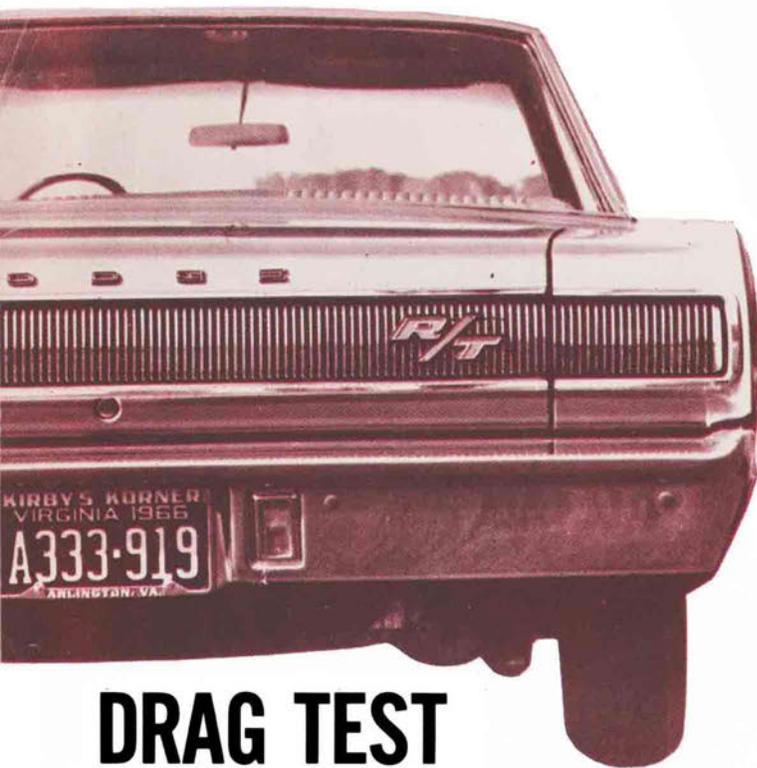
Other changes include an increased compression ratio, up to 10-1, and a big single Carter AFB 4327S carburetor with each of its four barrels measuring 1 1/16-inches. The air cleaner is of the dual snorkel design, allowing plenty of air to reach the carburetor.

Hydraulic lifters are used along with a new design .450-inch high-lift cam. The intake lobe provides a duration of 268 degrees and the ex-



ABOVE — Although some of the pictures in this story show smoke coming from the stock tires, it was possible to bring the R/T off the line with a minimum of wheelspin. BELOW — Huge 440-cubic inch engine is the largest displacement engine offered in a high-performance automobile. R/T is also available with 426-cu. in. hemi, rated at 425-hp with two four-barrel carburetors.





DRAG TEST

haust is 284 degrees. The burned gasses pass out through a pair of low-restriction cast exhaust manifolds that have been designed to provide better streamlining and branch separation allowing a smooth flow into the 2¼-inch exhaust pipes with minimal restrictions.

The car, as we received it, carried the following equipment and prices:

Sales Code	Description	Manufacturer's Suggested Retail Price
WS23 TT1 P6K	Dodge Coronet R/T-8-2 Dr. Hardtop.....	3,199.00
83	440 Magnum Engine 4BBL Dual Exhaust	
31W	Stripe, White	
355	Coronet Light Package includes	11.30
363	R/T Package	
395	Torqueflite Transmission	
408	Sure Grip Differential.....	37.60
421	Music Master Radio	57.35
451	Power Brakes.....	41.75
456	Power Steering.....	94.85
486	Console	52.85
522	Tinted Windshield.....	21.20
536	Mirror, Remote Control, Outside Left.....	5.45
557	Lap Belt-Center Passenger Rear	9.10
587	Wheel Covers-Simulated Magnesium.....	73.95
693	Manufacturers Statement of Origin	
48	7.75 x 14 Red Streak Tires	
	Sub Total	3,604.40
057	Destination Charge	63.00
	Total	3,667.40

This price is quite competitive with other cars in this same performance bracket.

Present (1966) NHRA rules classify most of the other hot street machines, such as the GTO, 442, Chevelles, street hemis, and Chevy II's, in either A/S, B/S, or C/S.

Using the R/T shipping weight of 3565 and an advertised horsepower of 375, we arrive at a ratio of 10.04 lbs. per hp. This falls right in the middle of C/S which is currently 9.50 to 10.59 lbs. per hp. There is a widespread belief,

"I think Dodge's new R/T is going to be a big hit with the performance minded buyer. It sure gets the job done in a hurry."

however, that NHRA is planning to change their present rules in the stock classes. At this time it is unclear just what NHRA will do but it appears that the Dodge R/T will be competing directly with the GTO's and Olds 442's.

Our test on the Dodge R/T 440-Magnum was planned to show several aspects of this car. The first phase of the test was concerned with the car in absolutely showroom stock condition. We received the car directly from the assembly plant and delivered to a local dealer. We proceeded to have the car put through normal pre-delivery procedures at Kirby Dodge in Arlington, Virginia. Then, after driving the car around northern Virginia for a few days to get some miles on it and loosen it up a little, we took it out to Capitol Raceway in nearby Maryland to see just what it would do in the quarter.

In keeping with our policy of using top name drag racing drivers in our tests, we contacted "Wild Bill" Shrewsberry of "L.A. Dart" fame, and asked him if he would be interested in handling the driving for our Dodge R/T. He was more than willing to give us whatever assistance was needed. Since Bill was in town for an entire week, we turned the car over to him to give him a chance to become accustomed to driving the bear. Dodge will not have their four-speed version of the R/T ready until January so our car was equipped with a 3-speed Torqueflite. Bill commented that although he was used to driving a stick-shift car, he really enjoyed driving the Dodge equipped with an automatic transmission.

DRAG STRIP PERFORMANCE

With approximately 350 miles on the odometer, we took the new R/T out to Capitol Race-





way. The weather was almost ideal, sunny and bright but with a cool temperature in the lower seventies. Capitol has slightly better than average bite, is level, and is equipped with the latest Chrondek timing.

Our plan was to run the R/T in absolutely stock trim. The timing was **not** checked, the plugs had **not** been removed, cleaned, or replaced, the carb was **not** touched, and all regular equipment, such as spare tire, jack, power steering belt, etc., was left intact. The original equipment Goodyear Red Line tires were used. The stock 3.23:1 ratio rear was also retained.

Bill made 12 runs with the car in this condition. The only changes that were made during this time was the removal of the air cleaner and lowering the tire pressure by a few pounds. Neither of these changes seemed to make any difference. The only problem that was experienced was vapor lock. Under certain weather conditions this little problem can crop up on most any car. It is easily solved by the installation of an electric fuel pump.

Bill tried several different driving procedures (which accounts for some of the slower times that were turned) but the system that worked best for him seemed to be to just put the shift

ABOVE LEFT—Clean, simple grille is used only on the R/T, is similar to the Charger, and is unmistakably Dodge. ABOVE—Interior is quite attractive. Handy console houses shift unit, extra glove box. Teleflex tach is mounted to under side of dash.

lever in Drive, hold his foot on the brake, and bring the engine rpm's up to 1100. Then when the green light came on, the brake was released and the throttle pushed almost to the floor. The car shot off the line with some wheel spin for a few feet, and then the throttle was pressed all the way down and held there through the traps, letting the transmission shift itself.

In attempting to manually shift the trans, the lag between actually moving the lever and having the gears shift seemed to vary considerably from run to run. It was difficult to actually get the trans to shift when we wanted it to which resulted in pumping-up the lifters on several runs.

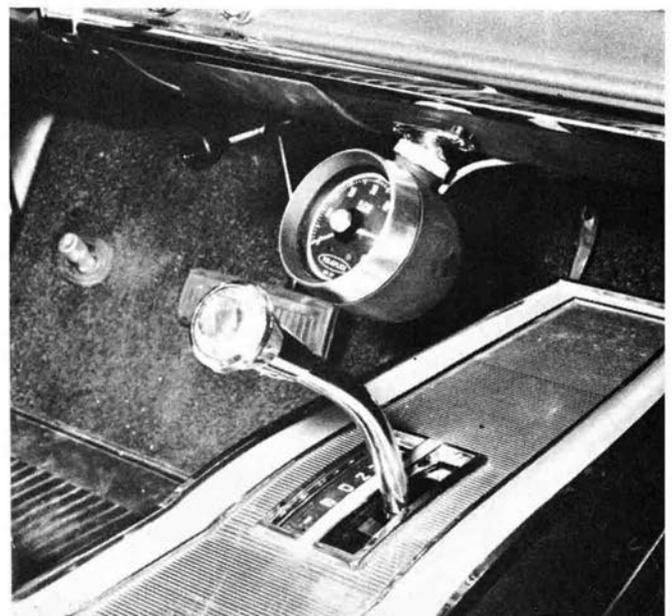
Our five best runs were as follows:

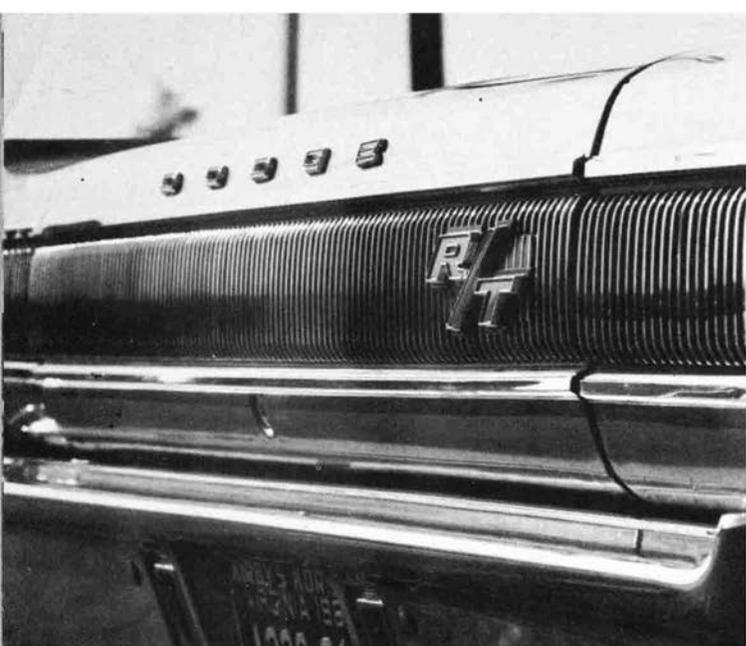
14.35	99.00
14.37	100.11
14.46	99.88
14.49	100.11
14.52	99.88

"Dodge's R/T is Chrysler's answer to the GTO and 442. It's going to make itself known on the nation's drag strips this summer. I put thousands of miles a month on my own Dodge and I know they can take plenty of punishment in day to day driving."



JANUARY





our R/T and make all the changes that NHRA will allow on a C/S automobile. We will then place "Wild Bill" Shrewsberry behind the wheel again and see how close we can come to the NHRA national record.

Changes anticipated in our R/T will include a set of Stahl headers, whatever suspension changes are necessary, the addition of a set of Cure Ride shocks, a Stewart-Warner electric fuel pump, a lower rear-end ratio, and a super-boss tune-up.

Be sure to see the follow-up to this month's test in the February issue of Super Stock. In our next test we'll strip the R/T down to the bare essentials and make all the modifications the law allows and still run in stock class. Can we break the NHRA National Record? Check with us next month and see!

DRAG TEST

In comparing this to off-the-showroom-floor times of other potential C/S cars, we feel that the Dodge R/T is going to be mighty rough to beat. There is, however, always the chance that NHRA, or other sanctioning groups, will apply some type of factor to the R/T's power to weight ratio to move it into a higher class.

The stage is now set for the next phase of our R/T drag test. We will transfer the car to the capable hands of Bill Stiles and Jere Stahl. These two experts (who together own both the Springnationals and Nationals "Top Stock Eliminator" title with their street hemi) will take

Ultimately, this series of tests will see our R/T also set up to compete under 1967 AHRA class rules with all the changes made to the car that are allowed.

DRIVING & STYLING IMPRESSIONS

Several members of the Super Stock staff, as well as Bill Shrewsberry, had the opportunity to drive the car. The only feature that was universally disliked by everyone that drove the car was the position of the steering wheel. It was felt to be too high. And, unfortunately, Dodge doesn't offer an adjustable wheel in the R/T. But this is actually a minor complaint. The



LEFT—Bill drops the air pressure a few pounds in an attempt to gain a few tenths of a second et. Varying the tire pressure didn't seem to help much as et stayed in the low 14-second range.



rest of the car just couldn't be recommended more highly. Not only does the R/T have plenty of steam, but it has a fine balance of ride and handling. The car corners with a minimum of roll or lean, and although the ride is firm, it's not harsh. The interior appointments are very attractive but not quite as rich as some of the competition. The bucket seats that were in our car seemed to be a little on the soft side, but not to the point of being uncomfortable.

One big improvement that the Dodge designers have made in this car over last year's street hemi is in the important area of product identification. When a prospective buyer is trying to decide which performance car he is going to purchase, he wants to make sure that it has distinctive enough identification so that everyone will know what it is. The street hemis of last year had only a very small 426-hemi insignia to set them apart from a regular Coro-

net. This year's R/T sports a large R/T symbol on each quarterpanel as well as on the grille and the deck lid. The R/T also enjoys a grille and a rear deck treatment all its own. The chassis and body, of course, are the same as that used on the Coronet. But the final trim is distinctive enough to set the R/T completely apart from the rest of the Dodge line.

SUMMARY

It was the general opinion of those participating in the test that the Dodge R/T was one of the best all-around performance packages currently being offered. For those interested strictly in drag strip performance, the R/T will probably deliver as much or more performance per dollar than any other car currently available. And, in case you wondered, the R/T symbol stands for "road" or "track." The R/T is equally at home on either the drag strip or the street. ■

