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Truckin'

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Truckin'

Racing Beat
Anaheim, Calif.
1989 Mazda B-2200



California Haulin'

BY FRANK HAMILTON

Here's a solution for mini-truck enthusiasts who are involved in jet skiing. It's a dedicated jet ski toting Mazda B-2200 which Racing Beat in Anaheim, California has dubbed "California Haulin'."

Haulin' indeed. This little truck has what it takes to thrill any driver and Racing Beat boasts that the truck employs a 240 horsepower turbo-charged rotary engine and a four speed transmission, making it



This turbo-charged rotary Mazda really gets it on!



PHOTOGRAPHY: FRANK HAMILTON

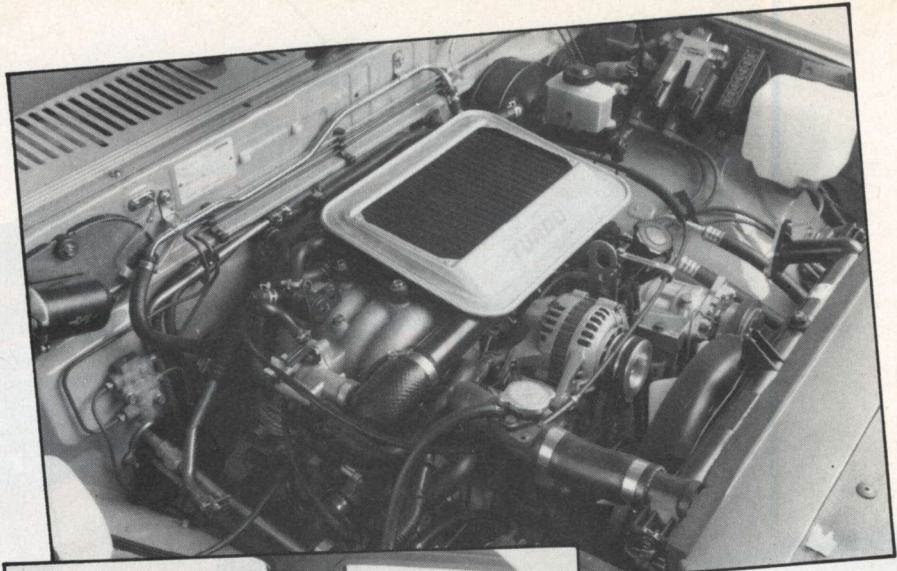
CALIFORNIA HAULIN'

perhaps the only truck of its kind in the United States!

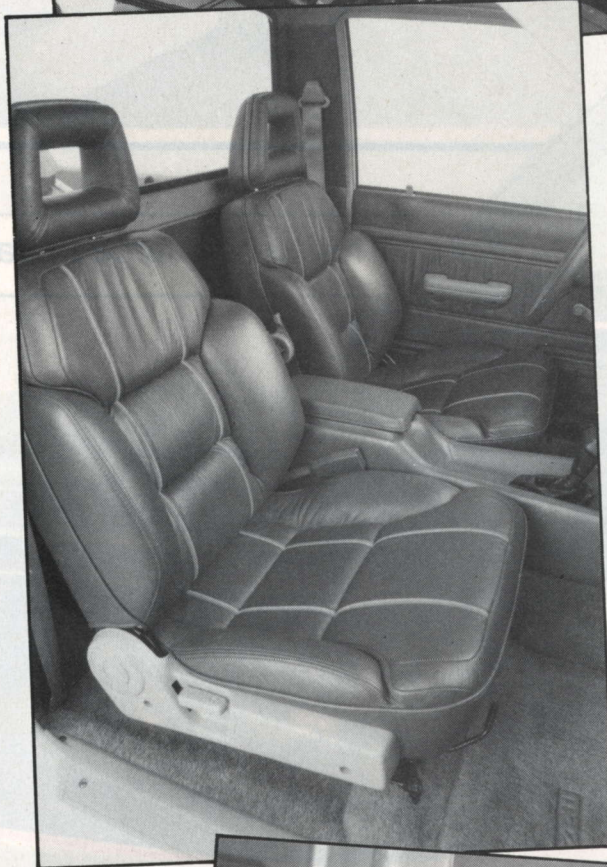
Speed isn't all this truck has going for it because this ride sports a seemingly limitless array of custom tricks. The truck is the brainchild of Jim Mederer and Rysuke Oku of Racing Beat who strived to integrate features into the vehicle which they thought reflected the California lifestyle to it's fullest. What's the California lifestyle? Well, it could be anything you want it to be, but when it comes to trucks, it means horsepower, style and fun. In this case, the fun comes in the form of a serious jet ski haulin' mini-truck. Racing Beat commissioned Ric Shields And Associates to build this California dream truck.

The eye is captured by the unique alterations which enhance the body of this California mini. Looking at the front of the Mazda, you'll notice a replacement fiberglass hood which features two low profile scoops located directly above the engine's intercooler. Fiberglass front fenders add a smooth look to the front half of the truck. Complementing smoked Lexan covers fit over the headlights, and foglights are mounted into the front air dam underneath a color keyed, molded-in front bumper. Mazda RX-7 mirrors were mounted onto the doors and work well with the body which sports a blue and white paint scheme.

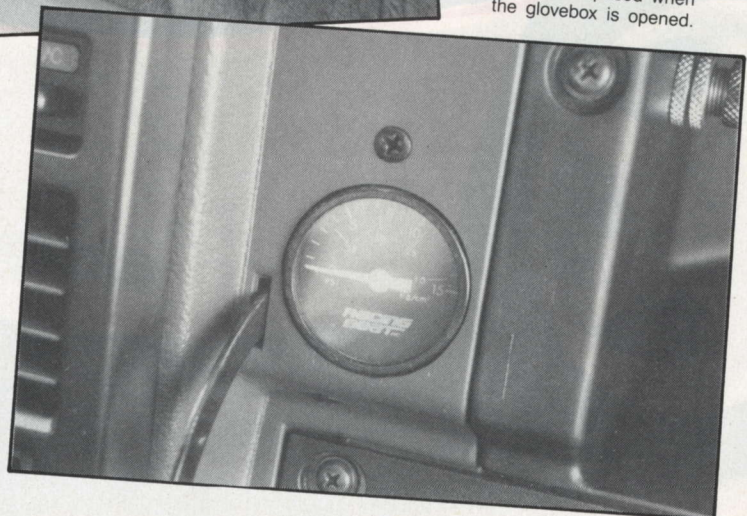
The absence of a tailgate brings attention to the bed where an orange fiberglass deck facilitates easy loading of a jet ski. Speaking of jet skis, Racing Beat had a custom paint scheme applied onto a jet ski which matches this truck. The ski secures into the front of the bed with a custom locking mechanism designed specifically for this application. In addition, a custom tail pivots out of the way to allow easy access to the jet ski. The tail locks down and is released from the cab. A special deck, located on the truck bed floor, stretches back to the molded-in rear bumper. Graphics run along the smoothed bed walls and



ABOVE — You're looking at a 240 horsepower turbocharged Mazda rotary engine! The intercooler mounted on top of this engine is ventilated through scoops built into the hood. This engine, when combined with a four-speed automatic transmission, delivers smooth powerful horsepower to the rear wheels.

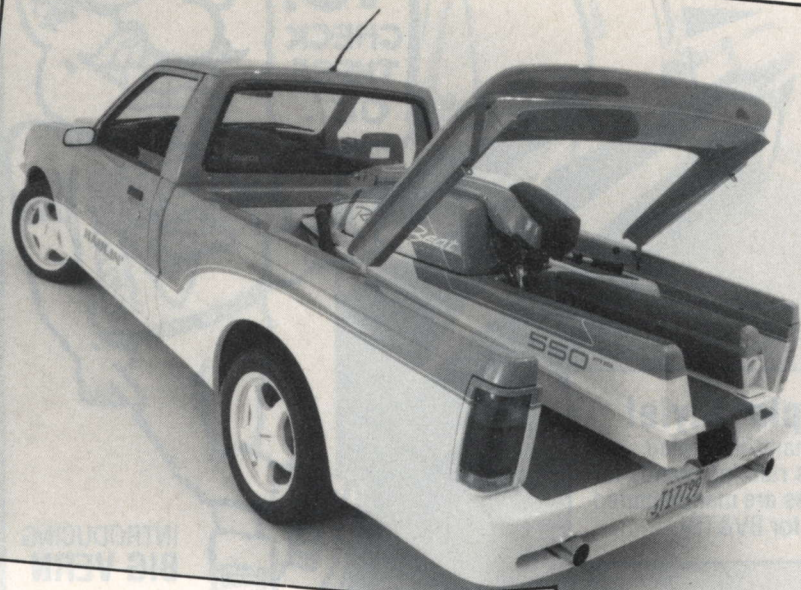


LEFT — Gray Mazda 626 buckets are comfortable and stylish. Door panels, carpeting, steering wheel, headliner and dashboard are all matched with finesse.



BELOW — This boost gauge is exposed when the glovebox is opened.

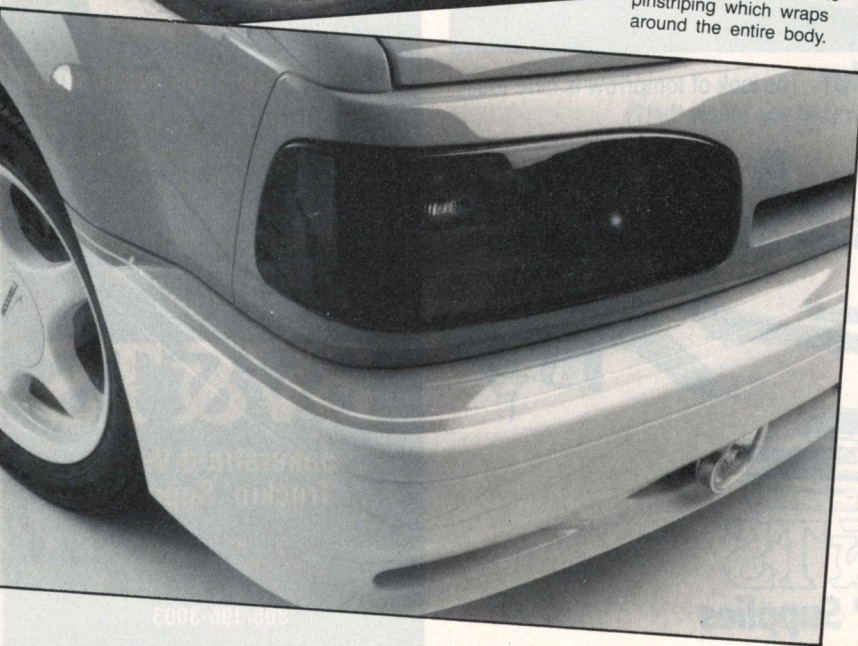
BELOW — A rear view reveals the pivoting tailgate, molded in bumper and custom fiberglass bed insert. To top it off, a jet ski was painted to match the *California Haulin'* truck.



LEFT — Goodyear 50 series Eagles are mounted onto Woodbell 16 inch wheels.



BELOW — Headlights are masked with form fitting Lexan covers. The molded in front bumper sports an air dam with fog lights. Notice the two-tone color scheme which goes from blue to white. Also note the fine pinstriping which wraps around the entire body.



chromed tailpipe tips peek through slots which were cut into the rear bumper. The rear bumper also features a sunken license plate box.

The Mazda sits on a slightly lowered suspension, accomplished through the use of de-arched rear springs, and low profile front springs. Goodyear 50 series Eagles were mounted onto 16 inch Woodbell wheels to complete the stance.

One of the truck's most noteworthy features is not even visible from the exterior. In fact, you have to open the hood before viewing the Racing Beat installed turbo-charged 240 horsepower Mazda 13B engine. The twin rotary engine has an equivalent 1300 cc displacement. It features an intercooled turbocharging system which produces 13 psi of boost. The Mazda employs a four speed automatic transmission. Drivetrain functioning is powerful, smooth and virtually vibration free! Racing Beat claims this particular engine/transmission combination is only available in Japan.

The interior is just as clean as the rest of the truck. A driver is treated to a sporty feel as he takes control of the truck. The cab contains Mazda 626 bucket seats sporting overstuffed padding and gray leather upholstery. Gray carpeting and gray door panels, steering wheel, headliner and dashboard match the stylish seats. The dashboard features full instrumentation and a boost gauge is located in the glove box. This truck is also wired for sound thanks to a Panasonic audio system which consists of a compact disc player, equalizer and power booster. Speakers were placed in the stock front locations and in the rear corners of the cab.

This vehicle is certainly an innovator both in style and function. It is proof positive that there's still room for fresh new design solutions in today's truck market. Although Mazda currently doesn't plan to market a *California Haulin'* model, the one shown here is evidence that there is an interest in dedicated truck alternatives. This project is a product of the combined interests of Mazda Motors Of America, Goodyear, Panasonic and others. Don't assume that a design concept such as this one will soon fade into obscurity. On the contrary, it could hint at the shape of things to come!