

Begins life as hardtop

Dodge is building new convertible

The 400 convertible is the first convertible built by Dodge since 1971, when the last of the old Dodge Challengers were built at the Hamtramck assembly plant.

"We think that the time has come for convertibles to reappear. The interest they generate is fantastic. People want them," said Tom Pappert, Chrysler Corp.'s vice president for U.S. automotive sales.

"So Dodge is going to build them one, at an affordable price."

The car will not be produced until March, so no price is available yet.

A two-door model will be built for conversion to a convertible and will be assembled with a bare metal roof and without windows.

THE CAR will be shipped from the St. Louis assembly plant to Cars and Concepts Inc., in Brighton. There, the roof will be removed, strengtheners added and a power convertible top and windows unique to the convertible installed.

While in assembly at St. Louis, structural reinforcements will have been added to the convertibles-to-be to insure they meet all federal impact and crash standards.

Most important of these additions is a "torque tube," a Y-shaped spine added to the floor pan of the cars to replace the strength previously provided by the fixed metal roof.

Computer analysis showed that the "torque tube" was more effective in maintaining rigidity and strength than the more traditional "boiler plate" addition to convertible chassis.

OTHER REINFORCEMENTS to the convertible platform include additions to the "A" pillar, doors and quarter panels.

In addition, the windshield of the convertible is lower. The windshield pillars are finished with a full-width molding.

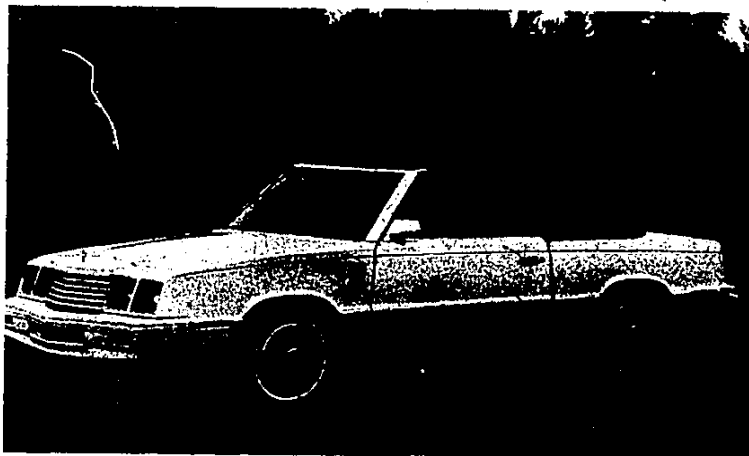
And because there is not fixed metal roof, the front seat belts loop over the bucket seat backs and are anchored in the quarter panel area.

Standard is Chrysler's four cylinder, 2.2-liter engine.

The standard automatic transmission is a three-speed transaxle.

The tires are the same low-pressure, 14-inch steel belted wide white wall tires designed for the Dodge 400.

OTHER STANDARD equipment



The Dodge 400 contains a "torque tube," a Y-shaped metal spine added to the floor pan to replace the strength previously provided by a metal roof.

includes 60-amp alternator, power brakes (disc in front and drum in rear), electronic ignition and voltage regulator, dual horns, and rack and pinion power steering.

The Dodge 400 convertible's standard equipment includes power convertible top with console control switch, tinted glass, carpeting in pas-

senger compartment, color-keyed bumper rub strips, and bright-edged protective vinyl body moldings with side marker lights.

The driving mirrors are an inside day/night rear view mirror and body-color dual remote control outside mirrors.

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