



## Mercury Cougar Eliminator Part 1



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Here is Bill Veach #299 with the "other woman". The 351W with performance option has moved this Eliminator (9F91M565884) along for 90,000<sup>mi</sup> miles now. FMX automatic, styled steel wheels, AM-FM Stereo, F-70-14 WSW tires, a blue paint and power steering complete the package. Getting 16-23 MPG helps also.

## ELIMINATOR

The Cougar Eliminator. Now you and I or most of our membership know of the late 60's and early 70's horsepower and flashiness contests that the people of Motor City used to run each year; but what was it all about in L-M talk. The predecessors to the Eliminator were effective in getting "and GO" into the Cougar's list of superlatives. Unfortunately, the Group II Cougars and the GTE's were also in limited quantities and this meant-- Expensive. Not exactly what the average guy could afford to put on to the street. A regular Cougar with some after market add-ons was more in his budget. Then the Motor City really got serious in the last of the 60's and put out a complete package--a street machine which you could afford and complete with all the glitter which you needed to show off your new semi-racecar.

The Plymouth Roadrunner was the best example of early affordable go. A moderately large engine, a low cost body and interior, a standard four speed or automatic and a bunch of sales. It sold very well its first year out.

L-M also wanted to cash in on the affordable go market. FoMoCo was putting together a hot list of Boss Mustangs and Mach I's. L-M decided to go the route of the "package deal" also. Taking the already successful Cougar and stuffing a big or bigger mill into the engine compartment was simple. Selling it was different. L-M needed the flashiness to help the sales along. They took the name Eliminator from the doors of Dyno Don Nicholson's 1/4 mile Comets and Cougars and applied it to the hind quarters of a special 1969 Cougar.

The first Eliminator for the street in a sense was strictly a one-off car to test the market and to test the components proposed to be used. It was run around the show circuits and let out to the automotive press. It really was a beauty!

Came with all the goodies necessary to turn heads at the strip and on the street. It had a dazzling Radiant Sun Gold paint job, an air dam up front and a moulded spoiler in the rear. A CJ 428-4V ram air engine going into an automatic transmission got the new Cougar a moving.



Is this where the name for the first Cougar Eliminator came from? This is Dyno Don Nicholson next to his fiberglass 68 Cougar. Dyno managed to get a new world record for his 1/4 mile efforts out of this very Cougar. The car went 7.48/ 191<sup>mi</sup> back in the 1968 season. 427 SOHC

The most unusual item about it was not up front, but what was in the rear. The axle to be exact. The rear axle was a two-speed. One ratio for racing and one for riding. The axle, or third member, was made by Dana-Spicer and they called it the "Streep". The engagement or selection of ratios was controlled from inside by the driver.

The first Eliminator further came with an XR-7 dash, high back bucket seats in black vinyl with hop sack fabric inserts and mod red and orange stripes. The sides of the car carried a long thin white stripe, later to be standard on the production line Eliminators. A hood scoop for the ram air package 428 Cobra Jet completed the visual image of the new Cougar.



**Here is the prototype to the 1969 Eliminators. Notice the different style of rear air foil used. You might also notice some other subtle changes in the trim and striping used. The wheels were made by American Mag Co.**

Randy Goodling #95 has reported to us that this same Eliminator Prototype is still around. It was last known of in the Los Angeles area for sale at about \$15,000. Unfortunately, the exact whereabouts are unknown. If a member can fill us in on this please write your Cat's editor.

The production line Eliminators didn't start appearing until March of 1969. The 69 Eliminator became a package, not a body style all its own. The body ID tag alone does not distinguish it from other Cougars, but it was a different breed of cat inside and out. For a start, the clock and instruments were like the XR-7s, however it was a black dash with COUGAR on the right hand side. There were no toggle switches or lights over the area in the center of the dash. The 69 Eliminators were also the only Cougars that year-model which had the high back bucket seats. The seats came with comfort weave vinyl in black, blue or white. The respective interior codes were 5A... Black, 5B...Blue, EA...White seats with black carpet, EB...White seats with blue carpet.

The Eliminators only paint codes were: White (M code), Blue (6 code), Yellow (9 code), and Orange (3 code). They had side stripes starting at the extreme of the front quarters and swept rearward to just behind the doors, and ending with the word ELIMINATOR. The stripes were either white or black, depending upon the body color. (For those of you in need of these, Kirk Youngberg says Total Performance, 40631 Irwin, Mt. Clemens Mich. 48045 has these available at \$125.00 each set.)

The standard engine was the 351-4V Windsor (M code). As options, the owner could for an extra fee obtain a 390-4V (S code), a 428-4V (Q code), a 428-4V ram air (R code). Then as an Eliminator exclusive, the 302-4V HO [Boss] (G code) was also available. One 427 powered Eliminator was built. The 429 HO was proposed to be available, but these never became a reality until the 1970 models. See the June July 81 Cat for more about the 429 Cougars of 1969/70, Super Studs by R.L. Martin.



**This really neat 69 Eliminator belongs to Norb Paunovich #86. Its orange with black stripes. Has a 351-W engine and a four speed behind it. Black interior. 9F91M56274**

Transmissions for the engines listed were Cruise-O-Matic, C-6 Cruise-O-Matic, and both close ratio and wide ratio four speeds. The 428's had to have one of the four speeds or the C-6 automatic and the 302 Boss was sold only with four speeds. A competition handling package was optional on all Cougars and became mandatory when a 428 was under the hood.

The axle ratios that L-M selected for you (unless other wise specified) was best represented by saying-- ACCELERATION. The Eliminator was geared to be used on the street or strip. Not necessarily for the open road. Ratios went all the way up to 4.30, however, if the 4.30 ratio were chosen the Detroit Locker device must also be used. All cars with a 3.50 or higher ratio meant that a 31 spline axle would be used, instead of the more common 28 spline axle. Most Eliminators were equipped with a 3.50 ratio on four speeds, or a 3.25 on automatics. The Boss 302's were often delivered with 3.91 gears, or 4.30 when the close ratio four speed was opted. Standard tires were F-70-14 on 6" rims.

The suspension under the 1969 Eliminators was more in tune to a performance car than a luxury car. Mercury's new logo for performance cars "Streep Scene" went in to new Eliminator by way of slightly higher spring rates and sway bars as standard equipment. ( Note: Streep= street/strip) Taking a hint from the successful 1968 1/2 Mustang Cobra Jets, L-M made the staggered shock absorber set up available on all Eliminators with competition suspension. When a 3.91 or higher axle ratio of a Cobra Jet engine was installed this also meant the special shock absorbers came along. The total package made the Eliminator much better for the drag strip and also somewhat better on the cornering too.

Next issue of the Cat will be [part two of ELIMINATOR!](#)

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