

PICKUP TRUCKS

Fun! Freedom! Function! The American Dream!



Michael Benson
Photos by Barry C. Altmark



TRUCKS



BY

Michael Benson

PHOTOS BY BARRY C. ALTMARK

Crescent Books

New York • Avenel

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The author wishes to acknowledge the following persons and organizations, without whose help this book would have been impossible. Lisa and Tekla Benson, Frank Calderon, Maria Damiani, Nancy Davis, Rita Eisenstein, Dave Grayson, David Henry Jacobs, Norman Jacobs, Katharine Repole, Milburn Smith, Jose Soto.

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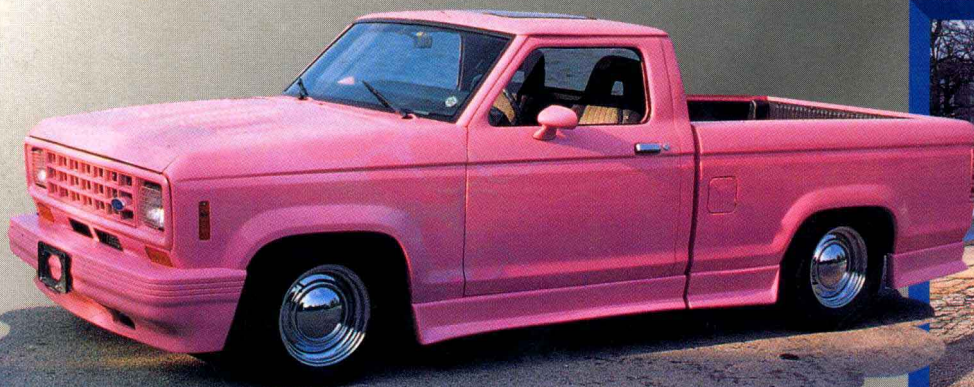
CONTENTS



INTRODUCTION	
Pickups mean freedom	8
A HISTORY OF PICKUP TRUCKS	
A year-by-year guide	13
NEW TRUCKS	
They still have that smell	67
PICKUP LOVE	
It's a beautiful thing	72
TRUCKS AT WORK	
Just doin' what they do	74
MONSTER PICKUPS	
Beasts that leap and crush	80
CUSTOMIZED TRUCKS	
Low riders in hot colors	85
RACING TRUCKS	
From the back road to the superspeedway	89
INDEX	93

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Photos by Barry C. Altmark

Ten Best Uses for a Pickup Truck

10. Hauling home the latest do-it-yourself project that you'll probably never finish
9. Driving yourself to work in a snowstorm and laughing at everyone who doesn't have a pickup
8. Arriving at the beach with umbrellas, chairs, coolers, music, and as many friends as you can squeeze in
7. Returning from a hunting trip with the gun rack, muddy clothes, tired hunters, and a buck on board
6. Busting a few bales of hay in the back and going for a hayride with 30 of your best friends
5. Dropping the tailgate for a picnic at a sporting event
4. Carrying the overload of goods you bought at the warehouse supermarket (now where can you store all this stuff?)
3. Loading the camping equipment and heading for the hills
2. Sitting in the back and staring at the stars
1. Bringing home 15 puppies from the pound







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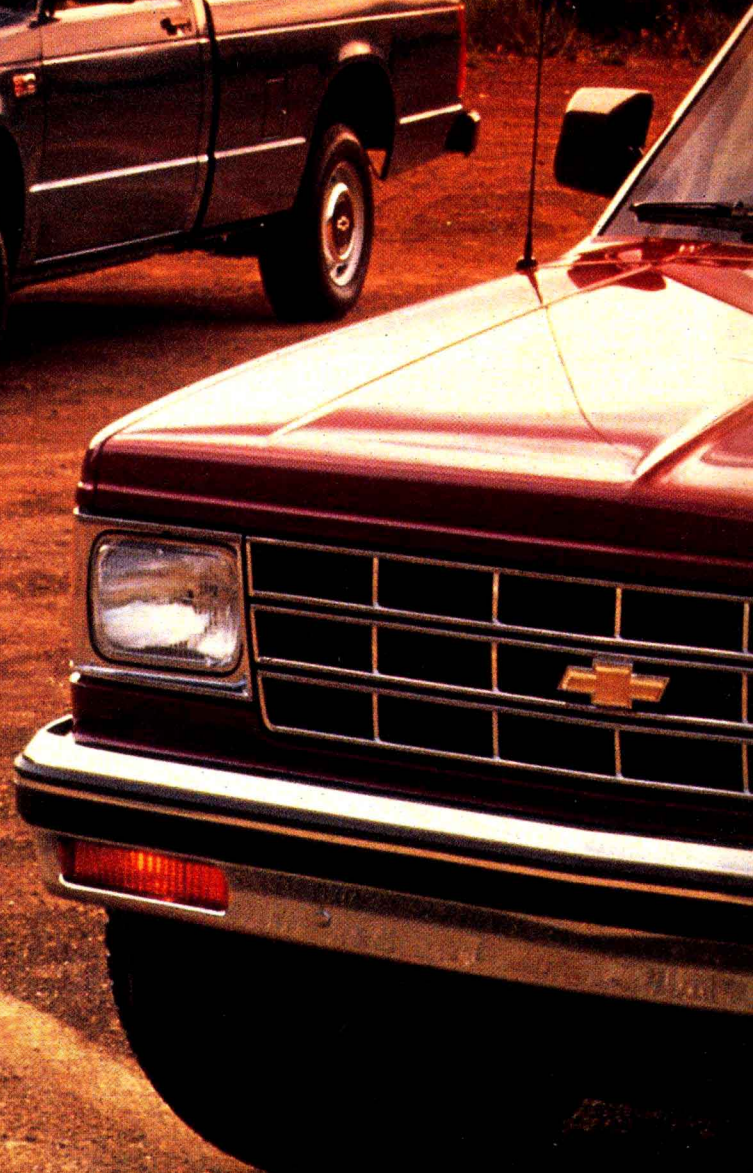


CONTENTS



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Introduction **PICKUPS**



MEAN FREEDOM

At the turn of the century, the automobile replaced the horse as the primary power behind land travel. Therefore, it isn't surprising that the motor vehicle

soon was called upon to replace the horse-drawn cart as the number-one method of hauling things from one place to another.





The 1990 Chevy 454 SS pickup was a full-sized pickup. The model was first introduced in 1936 and by 1990 was selling more than a half a million units a year. The truck came in either two- or four-wheel drive and both versions came with either a six-and-a-half-foot box or an eight-foot box. Trucks like the one shown here were produced at the General Motors plant in Fort Wayne, Indiana; Pontiac, Michigan; and Oshawa, Ontario.

Thus was born the pickup truck—a modified car with a big box in the back and enough strength to get the goods from the farm to the market. The pickup truck was quickly woven into the fabric of American life, a symbol of freedom, of successful small business, of rural pride. The pickup truck was the American Dream for the self-employed everywhere, but especially for the workers of God's good American earth.

Use your imagination

The pickup truck can do a lot more than just haul. Any pickup owner will tell you that his truck is functional in a thousand ways. During its history, the pickup has found itself playing many odd and unintended roles.

Park the pickup next to the skinny-dipping hole and you've got yourself a sundeck. Lower the tailgate and you've got a diving board.

PREVIOUS PAGE: In 1990, the Chevrolet S-10 pickup came with either two- or four-wheel drive—and each was available with either a six-foot or a seven-and-a-half-foot box.

On many an occasion, a pickup has served admirably as a makeshift bandstand.

Of course, pickups are perfect for hunters. Not only do they have a natural spot to mount the gun rack, but they make it easy to get the buck home.

Bust up a few bales in the back and its a hayride. Anyone who's ever hitchhiked out in the country can tell you what a butt-breaking experience it can be to, "Climb in the back."

In the fifties and sixties when Drive-In movies were the rage, pickup trucks were some of the few vehicles that routinely parked backwards in the open-air theaters.

Hey, why do you think they call it a bed?

Loving tribute

So here is our loving tribute to the good ol' pickup truck. You'll read a complete history of the pickup,

from the Model C's of 1905 to today's Ford Ranger.

We'll show you and tell you about some of the more exciting things that people do with their pickup trucks—like taking them out to the local racetrack, customizing them, or metamorphozing them into monster trucks.

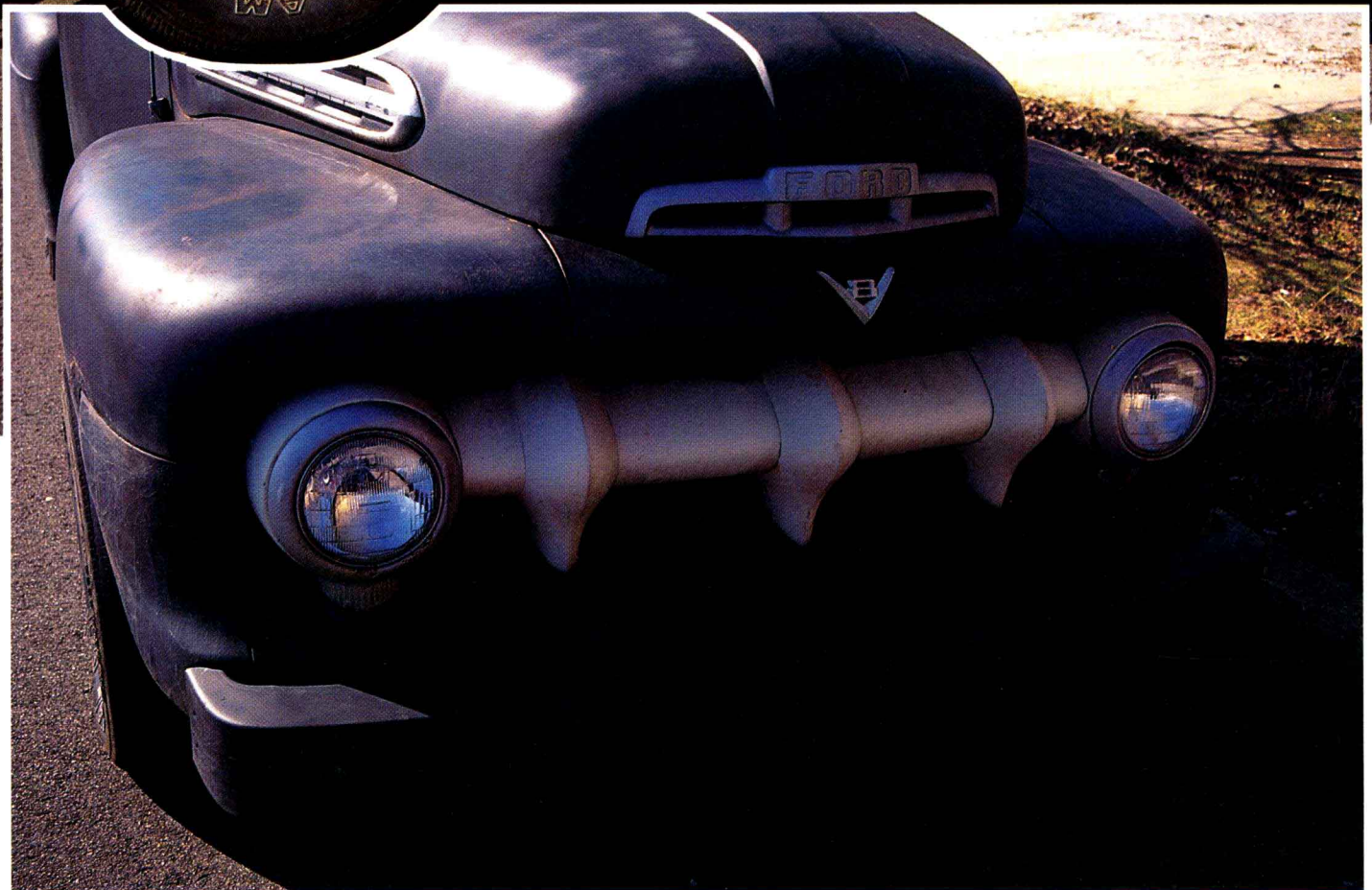
And throughout you'll be enjoying the great photography of Barry C. Altmark, the Associate Editor of Stock Car Spectacular magazine. He will not only show you shiny pickups, freshly waxed and posed in front of a scenic backdrop. He'll show you how pickup trucks really look, too—lovable and maybe a little muddy, a few two by fours sticking up out of the box.

—Michael Benson

The 1990 Chevy Short Bed pickup sacrificed some room in the box, but compensated for it by making room inside the cab for a driver and four passengers.



The 1951 Ford truck could have been the ugliest pickup in automotive history. Gone were the horizontal grille bars of the previous year, and in their place was this gaping mouth with three horrible teeth (or five if you counted the headlights which were mounted to the ends of the dental structure). The protrusions were called "Dagmars," after the buxom TV personality.



A HISTORY OF PICKUP TRUCKS

A year-by-year guide



1905

The first commercially produced pickup truck was the Delivery Car, manufactured by the Ford Motor Company. Ford's Model C car was simply fitted to a delivery body.

The wheelbase measured 78 inches. Only ten of the vehicles were produced, costing customers about \$950 each. The two-cylinder, 120.5 cubic inch (ci) engine with a two-speed transmission produced ten horsepower (hp).

The experiment only lasted for one year before production was stopped—but the concept had taken hold. For the next several years many Ford cars were independently converted into pickups.

The need for a cargo-hauling vehicle was there.

