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BUYER'S GUIDE
1971-74 Javelin/AMX

ROAD TEST
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HEAD-TO-HEAD
'69 Mercury Cougar vs. '68 Pontiac Firebird



1971-74 AMC Javelin/AMX

By Mark J. McCourt • Photography by Jeff Koch

Do you remember

wearing bell-bottom pants, pointy lapel shirts and shaggy long hair in the early 1970s? Admit it, you indulged in some of those fads. You know how fashions come and go; in the automotive arena, powerful pony cars were all the rage in the late 1960s, but by the mid 1970s, they were as yesterday as fedoras or Nehru jackets. One of the last holdouts was American Motor Corporation's 1971-1974 Javelin/AMX, which retained its big-cube V-8 engines and dramatic style to the end. Although they're overlooked by the Blue Oval/Bowtie crowd, the ample production, reasonable costs and loyal enthusiast network that Javelin/AMXs enjoy allow these end-of-an-era performance cars to hit the collectible bull's eye. And even though parts supplies are limited compared to some of the more popular muscle cars, you won't have to take out a second mortgage on your house to afford one. Better still, it's not a belly-button car, so you and your Javelin/AMX will be a standout wherever you go.

AMC was seeking to broaden its lineup in an attempt to match the Big Three's product range in the mid 1960s. Their contribution to the pony car wars came in the shape of the 1968 Javelin, a four-seat sports coupe based on the Rambler American platform. The Javelin was a conventional design with a live rear axle, a choice of straight-six or V-8 engines and front bucket seats, but its handsome fastback styling set it apart from the others. Along with the two-seat AMX that ran on a shortened version of its platform, the Javelin enlivened the public's opinion of AMC and brought traffic and dollars into their showrooms.

As the pony car market matured, the players grew larger, heavier, more luxurious—and the Javelin followed suit. For 1971, AMC incorporated the AMX into the four-seat Javelin line. The newly christened Javelin/AMX grew an inch in wheelbase and three in length, and it was 3.3 inches wider than before; while the unibody car gained just over 400 pounds, it appeared more massive. The fastback body style was retained, but new signature features included a long, low hood and bulging, sharply defined fenders. Trans-Am racing experience dictated the integrated roof, trunklid and optional front spoilers, and the exaggerated fenders provided extra clearance for wide racing tires. The interesting creased roof sim-

ulated a T-top when trimmed with optional vinyl inserts. The Javelin/AMX also wore an aerodynamic flush-mounted mesh grille set over the standard recessed Javelin unit and inset with round parking lamps and an AMX badge. A taillamp strip ran the width of the rear. Inside, a contoured instrument panel wrapped around the driver, and the engine-turned panel appliqué highlighted the optional Rally-Pac comprehensive instrumentation.

The \$3,432 Javelin/AMX combined the roles of both its forebears; standard features like a space-saver spare tire, center console, an electric clock, dual side mirrors and a high-level flow-through ventilation system added upscale creature comforts. Options included the "360 Go" or "401 Go" packages, which brought an upgraded 360-cu.in. V-8 or a 401-cu.in. V-8, both with four-barrel carbs, functional fiberglass cowl-induction hoods, dual exhausts, Twin-Grip differentials, power front disc/rear drum brakes, 15 x 7-inch slotted steel wheels, a blacked-out rear panel and hood T-stripes. Quick-ratio manual steering cost extra, as did power steering, air conditioning, and leather upholstery.

While a straight-six engine was base Javelin fare, the Javelin/AMX flexed its muscles with a two-barrel 360-cu.in. V-8 that made 245hp, mated to a floor-shifted three-speed manual. A four-barrel Motorcraft carburetor added 40hp, while the top 401-cu.in. V-8 delivered 330hp. In contemporary road tests, a 401-equipped Javelin ran from 0-60 mph in 7.8 seconds and did a 14.6-second quarter-mile at 97 mph. These performance credentials were buoyed by the Javelin/AMX's 1971 and 1972 Trans-Am Race Series Championship wins.

The same engines were available in 1972's \$3,109 Javelin/AMX, but the base engine was a smaller two-barrel 304-cu.in V-8; new SAE net horsepower ratings and additional smog equipment lowered the 304's output to 150hp, while the 360's rating dropped to 175hp in two-barrel trim or 220hp with the four-barrel, and the four-barrel 401 put out 255hp. The Borg-Warner three-speed automatic transmission that was optional in 1971 was replaced by a superior Chrysler Torque-Command automatic for 1972. External changes to the Javelin/AMX included taillamps with a chrome grid covering, black paint on the mesh grille, optional corduroy upholstery (leather was dropped), and parking lamp lenses



Front fenders come in fiberglass or used metal

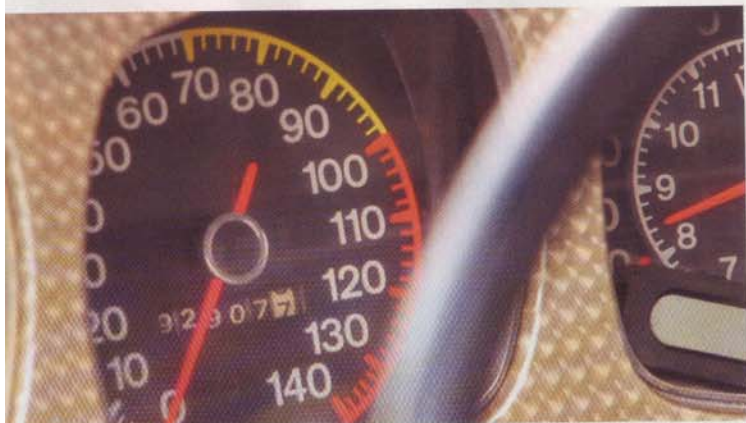
Engines • A 65-amp Delco 10SI alternator is a more powerful, reliable and easy replacement for the stock 40-amp Motorola unit.



Grille • Clean grille assemblies, chrome hood trim and functional cowl induction flappers from 1971-73 are all becoming very tough and expensive to locate.



Chrome hood-edge trim is getting scarce



Color-graded 140 mph speedometer is set in engine-turned dash



1970s AMC V-8s differ in bore size, but blocks are virtually the same

Doors • Doors, trunklids, lower valences, windshields and rear window glass are some of the parts that are common to all 1968–1974 Javelins and AMXs.

Interior • All regular interior fabrics and vinyls are available as reproductions, and this rare Pierre Cardin cloth can be found as NOS, but it's disappearing fast.

Taillamp panel • The 1973–74 taillamp panel is a notorious rusting area, as are the lower corners of the windshield and lower rear quarters, but salvage replacements are obtainable.



Automatic Transmission • 1972–74 automatics are sturdy Chrysler Torque-Command units, and 1971 models with troublesome Borg-Warners can be adapted with a kit.

Brakes • Upgrade drums to power discs courtesy of an Ambassador, Concord or Matador.



Wild optional Cardin cloth covers headliner, seats and door panels



Rally-Pac gauges and Tilt-Away columns can be added to strippers



Metal under rear window and under wheel arch trim is rust-prone



All Javelin/AMXs use 1971 Javelin grille box under mesh panel

switched from clear to yellow. New quad taillamps replaced the single unit in 1973, and the sculpted roof was smoothed, which allowed for a new optional vinyl roof design. A split vinyl/domino-pattern cloth interior could replace standard vinyl in the \$3,191 Javelin/AMX, but as in 1972, truly adventurous buyers could opt for interior code "T-341W," which was the ultra-fashionable Pierre Cardin Designer Series interior. This \$84.95 custom interior's red, silver, plum and white stripes traveled in geometric patterns across the black seats, door panels and headliner, and special badges adorned the exterior, as seen on our feature car, one of 4,152 cars so optioned. The Cardin Javelin/AMX was available in a limited palette, including Snow White, Stardust Silver, Diamond Blue, Wild Plum and Trans-Am Red.

The final year for the \$3,299 Javelin/AMX was 1974, and it had minimal changes: Five-mph impact standards required rubber bumper overrides, the Cardin interior option was dropped, the hood release was moved inside the car, and the Hurst-shifted four-speed manual transmission, handling package with

heavy duty springs and shocks, and stereo 8-track player with four speakers were all still available. A new seatbelt interlock system was the cause of electrical problems. A buyer could select the same engines as in 1972-73, but 1974's 401-cu.in. V-8 pumped out twenty fewer horsepower because the functional cowl-induction hood was no longer available. In fact, some late-production 1974 Javelin/AMXs wore steel hoods instead of typical fiberglass units.

While fashions, and fashionplate automobile interiors, come and go, the 1971-1974 Javelin/AMX offers a vivid glimpse back to a time of wild styles, muscular engines and swaggering attitudes. With only 15,961 built, there certainly aren't Javelin/AMXs in every garage, but they do change hands regularly with three to five ads appearing in each month's *Hemmings Motor News*. As some of America's favorite automotive underdogs, Javelin/AMXs have a strong following through three major national AMC clubs and a helpful network of parts suppliers and specialists.

Engines

Although the Javelin/AMX's V-8 engines range in displacement from 304- to 401-cu.in., all are considered small-blocks; 304- and 360-cu.in. engines used cast crankshafts, connecting rods and aluminum pistons, while the heavy-duty 401 used forged cranks and rods with cast pistons. The 304 had a bore and stroke of 3.75 x 3.44-inches and low 8.4:1 compression ratio, which allowed 150hp at 4,200 rpm and 245 lbs.-ft. of torque at 2,500 rpm. The engine breathed through a two-barrel Motorcraft 2100 carburetor and a single exhaust system. The 360, standard in 1971 and optional

other years, had a larger diameter 4.08-inch bore but used the same 3.44-inch stroke, and 8.5:1 c.r. In 1971, it made 245hp at 4,800 rpm and 365 lbs.-ft. of torque at 2,600 rpm in two-barrel trim; with the same carburetor, it was rated at 175hp at 4,000 rpm and 285 lbs.-ft. of torque at 2,400 rpm for 1972-74. With the optional Motorcraft 4300 four-barrel and dual exhausts, it put out 285hp at 4,800 rpm and 390 lbs.-ft. of torque at 3,200 rpm in 1971, or 220hp at 4,400 rpm and 315 lbs.-ft. at 3,100 rpm for the duration of its Javelin/AMX run. The top option was the 401-cu.in. V-8, which used a Motorcraft 4300 four-barrel, dual exhausts, a 4.17 x 3.57-inch bore and stroke and 9.5:1 compression; in 1971's gross ratings, it put out 330hp at 5,000 rpm and 430 lbs.-ft. of torque at 3,400 rpm, and with 1972/73's SAE ratings and 8.5:1 c.r., 255hp at 4,600 rpm and 345 lbs.-ft. at 3,300 rpm. In 1974, its power ratings were downgraded to 235hp at 4,600 rpm and 335 lbs.-ft. of torque at 3,200 rpm. Because all of these engines were shared with other AMCs, including the Hornet, Javelin, Matador and Ambassador, and Jeeps used the 360 while International trucks used the 401, parts availability and interchangeability is very good. The high-nickel-content metal used in all period AMC V-8 blocks makes them very robust and able to withstand high mileage without difficulty.

Transmissions

All Javelin/AMXs came standard with console-shifted, fully synchronized Borg-Warner T-14 three-speed manual transmissions. Available with the 1971 360-cu.in. V-8 was a console-shifted three-speed Borg-Warner M-11, while the M-12 came with the 401 Shift-Command automatic. A four-speed manual Borg-Warner T-10 with a Hurst shifter was also optional. In 1972, AMC replaced the B-W auto-

CLUBS

AMC World Clubs

303-428-8760 • www.amcwc.com
• Dues: \$30/year • Membership: 1,600

International American Motors Owners Association

616-323-0369 • www.iamonational.com
• Dues: 35/year • Membership: 1,850

National American Motors Drivers & Racers Association

262-843-4326 • www.namdra.org
• Dues: \$24/year • Membership: 1,635

Javelin AMX Registry

www.javelinamx.com/javhome/71amx/amx71.htm

AMC Forum

www.amcforum.net



Nameplate script is unchanged from first generation Javelin

matics with Chrysler Torque-Command units; the light-duty A998 could be paired to 304-inch V-8s, while the 360- and 401-inch V-8s used the heavy-duty A727 with manual shift capability. Common usage of these transmissions, being shared with other AMC vehicles (and Chryslers, in the case of the 1972-74 automatics), makes them easy to repair; Borg-Warner automatics can even be swapped for AMC/Chrysler units with an adaptor kit.

Differentials

The sturdy Dana Model 20 rear axle was used in all Javelin/AMXs, regardless of year. A number of rear axle ratios were available, and four-speed 401 Go-Pac-equipped Javelin/AMXs used 3.54 gears; other ratios, included 2.87, 3.15, 3.91 and 4.10. Also available was the Twin Grip clutch-driven locking differential, which is a very strong unit that was little changed over the four-year production period.

Suspension

The Javelin/AMX shared many of its underpinnings with other AMC models, but its suspension was firmer; the independent front used unequal-length control arms with twin ball joints, coil springs and an anti-roll bar, and the solid rear axle was dampened by semi-elliptic leaf springs. Heavy-duty springs and shocks were available as part of a han-

dling package available each year. Tire selection made a difference in responsiveness; while F70 x 14 belted tires were standard, F78 x 14 radials or E60 x 15 Goodyear Polyglas tires were options.

Brakes

Like most cars in its class, the Javelin/AMX came from the factory with far more power than it had brakes; unassisted 10-inch diameter four-wheel drum brakes were standard all around until 1974, when single-piston 11.2-inch vented front disc brakes switched from optional to standard. Power assist for the all-drum or disc/drum two-line brake system was available both as a stand-alone option and as part of the Go packages. These components were shared with the Matador, Ambassador, Gremlin, Hornet and Concord, so their common fitments increase the chance of locating individual parts or whole systems.

Unibody

The limited capital that AMC engineers often had to work with forced them to

cut corners where they could, and in the case of the 1971-74 Javelin/AMX, this means they retained the doors, trunklid, lower valences, rear window, door glass and windshield from the previous Javelin. Because they were used on two body styles for seven model years, these parts are easier to find than one might expect. The unibodies were "deep-dip" rustproofed in the factory, but Javelin/AMX-specific corrosion trouble areas include the inner fender troughs, the wheel wells, the sill under the rear window, and the A-pillars by the corners of the windshield. Hoods, doors and trunklids have been reproduced in fiberglass. New-old stock parts like taillamps, weatherstripping, front-end bushings and other minor trim are



Functional cowl-induction hood hardware is highly sought



AMX badges are available as NOS or reproductions



Trunk floor pans and trunklids are available from salvage cars



Taillamp insulating foam pads trap water and lead to rust

OWNER'S PROFILE



“I ordered this car

directly from the factory to my specifications, with the intent of keeping it to enjoy and drive,” says Jack Boughter, of Garden Grove, California. “I optioned it for power, with the Go Package, 401/4-bbl. V-8, 4-speed and no power-robbing power steering. The dealership called me three times because the factory strongly recommended installing power steering in any car with a 401-cu.in. engine, but I won and there’s only one thing under the cowl-induction hood — that engine!” Jack’s Javelin/AMX also wears the rare and funky Pierre Cardin interior; “It’s flashier than flashy, and it blows people away,” he laughs. The car serves as his daily driver and has covered 93,000 miles

to date; it has only required a new clutch, regular engine maintenance and new paint to keep it looking factory fresh.

How comfortable is it on today’s roads? “I’m 6’-2” and the buckets are exceptionally nice, even for long trips,” Jack told us; “It has radial tires, and the manual steering imparts a lot of information through the wheel that would be mushed with power assist.” The real test is the performance: “When I get on a metered entrance ramp to the freeway, I’m at 70mph within 250 feet — on the 1-2 and 2-3 shifts, I have to be easy with the clutch or the rear end will move out!” AMC muscle never goes out of style.

— Mark McCourt

still available, but supplies are dwindling; reproductions and clean used originals are available.

Interiors

“Almost every part of the Javelin/AMX interior is still available,” says Greg Beyer, owner of the AMC specialty company Auto Mania in Phoenix, Arizona. “We have carpets, headliners, trim, and vinyl, cloth and fabric for seat covers—we even have what’s probably the last remaining NOS Cardin interior cloth anywhere,” he adds. Because Javelin/AMXs were upscale cars, they offered neat accessories like Tilt-Away steering wheels, Rally-Pac gauges, center armrests and air

conditioning; these can all be added to stripper cars to personalize them and increase their comfort and value.

Restoration parts

AMC owners don’t have the luxury of picking up a parts catalog and ordering nearly every switch, fastener or washer that is required to rebuild their cars, but they don’t let this stop them. “We’ve had more reproductions come out in the last five years than the last 15,” says Eddie Stakes, owner of Planet Houston AMX in Texas. “You can buy reproduction floor pans, quarter panels and interior parts, but a lot of new stuff is just not out there anymore.” Eddie lists a large number of reproduction, NOS, salvage and performance AMC parts specialists on his company’s website, and a scan of the AMC Parts section of *Hemmings Motor News* turns up still more. Because AMC reused many parts from their original Javelin and AMX on the 1971–1974 models, many parts are interchangeable, but certain 1971 interior pieces, like the automatic transmission console and ashtray/lighter, were only used that year, making them harder to find. Other AMCs and Jeeps of the era can also contribute parts.

Performance parts

One of the best parts of owning an AMC V-8 engined-car is that because the exterior dimensions of the engines are so similar, a big-bore 401-cu.in. V-8 will easily slip in where the mildest 304 used to be. The inherent durability of AMC V-8s makes them ripe for performance upgrades. Remember that an AMC is not a Chevy or Ford when it comes to the aftermarket; some established names in the performance industry do make speed parts for Javelin/AMXs, but they are harder to find than those for the competition. Edelbrock offers lightweight aluminum intake manifolds in EGR or non-EGR

forms, including the Performer AMC, Torker and RPM Air Gap manifolds. Combining one of these with an Edelbrock Performer or Thunder Series carburetor in 600-800cfm capacity and one of their upgraded camshaft, lifters and lube packages can increase power substantially, as well as a K&N air filter and a set of Hedman headers. Edelbrock even offers a multi-point electronic fuel-injection system for modern driveability. If you’re into drag racing, Indy Cylinder Head of Indianapolis makes high-tech aluminum heads to fit 360- and 401-inch V-8s, and if you seek the ultimate in lightweight performance, their strengthened aluminum AMC 401 block accepts stock components.

Chassis upgrades

Although the Javelin/AMX’s performance car credentials were never in doubt, they can be bolstered to allow these cars to corner, ride and brake as sharply as they look. The suspension can be upgraded with coil-over shocks, thicker front and retrofitted rear G-Max anti-roll bars, PST Polygraphite bushings, or Energy Suspension’s urethane bushings. Upgraded hydraulic or gas shocks from Carrera, Koni or KYB will greatly enhance the ride and handling, and competition-style leaf spring traction bars from Competition Engineering will keep the power going to the pavement. Upgrading the brakes is necessary for any real “drivers,” and a swap to late 1970’s/early 1980’s AMC disc brakes is a bolt-on proposition; simply swap the calipers, rotors, spindles, backing plates and proportioning valves from one car to another. Rear disc brake kits are available, and a new or rebuilt power booster will cut braking effort considerably. Larger brakes are available from Stainless Steel Brakes, Baer Racing and Master Power. And for that period Trans-Am racing look, bolt on a set of 15-inch Minilite alloy wheels. 📌

VALUES

AMC Javelin/AMX

Year	Low	Average	High
1971	\$2,500	\$6,000	\$14,000
1972	\$2,500	\$6,000	\$14,000
1973	\$3,000	\$7,500	\$14,000
1974	\$3,000	\$7,500	\$14,000

PARTS PRICES

Alternator	\$130
Anti-roll bar kit	\$200
Battery tray	\$55
Brake Booster	\$110
Brake Rotor	\$180
Bumpers, front and rear	\$675
Coil springs (front, pair)	\$125
Decal/stripe kit	\$240
Fender (fiberglass)	\$290
Hood (fiberglass)	\$300
Oil pan	\$375
Quarter panel patch	\$150
Radiator	\$260
Rocker panel	\$100
Taillamp lens	\$90
Upholstery kit, front seats	\$270
Weatherstripping kit	\$200
Wheel trim ring set (14-in.)	\$300
Wheelwell molding	\$50