

MIGHTY

“Mighty Mite”, a familiar rig to most Marines is a very apt name applied to the general purpose vehicle designated by the military as Truck 1/4 Ton 4 x 4 M422. This light and extremely maneuverable four-wheel drive vehicle is for the most part an unfamiliar sight to most four wheelers. The release of the “Mite”, as Vietnam based U.S. Marines dub their rugged partner, has been slow and almost nil to the civilian popu-



MITE

lace. To a lucky few, as Bob Adlen, a west Los Angeles attorney, who's “Mite” is featured in this article, the opportunity to obtain one is usually accidental. “Bobby on the spot” you might say; he picked up his rig at a county auction. Originally the “Mite” was transferred from the Marines to the Navy as an Ordnance School vehicle. It was then discharged into civilian service to a municipal airport where they

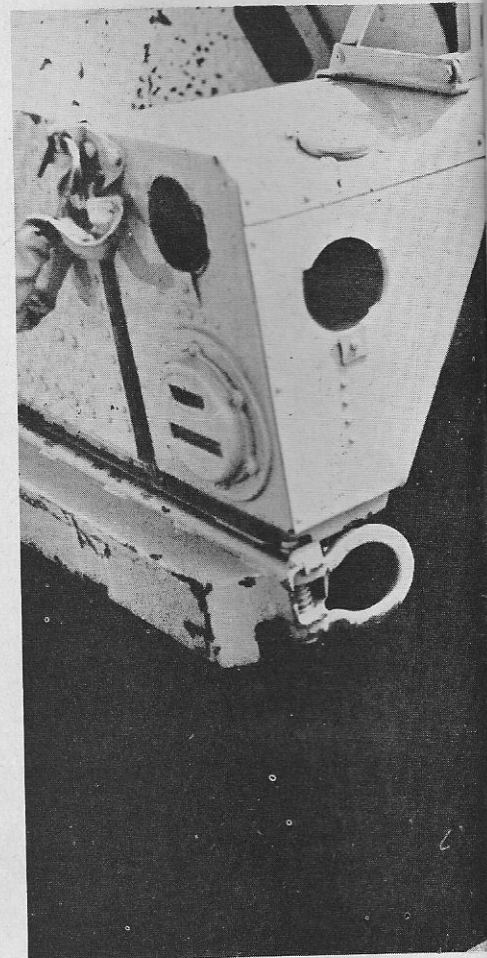
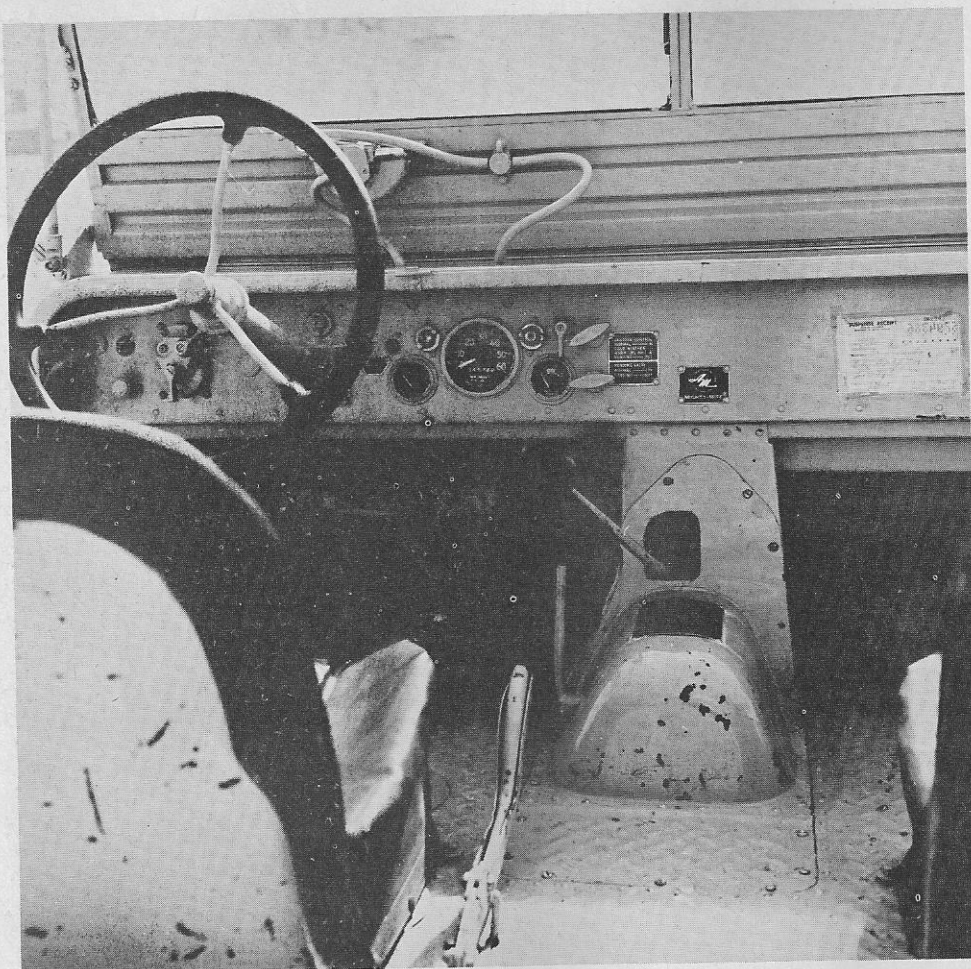


evidently had little or no use for it, so off to the auction block it went.

Weighing in at 1700 pounds, the aluminum bodied rig is powered by an AMC 54 horsepower (107 cid) V-4 air-cooled engine. The transmission is a selective 4-speed, synchromesh type with low gear being used primarily for compound operation. The transfer case is an auxiliary gear unit attached to the rear of the transmission and is of the single speed type. Suspension is of the independent type, providing full articulation. Longitudinal leaf springs are mounted in a unique way which virtually eliminates roll-overs.

The interior reflects more than a spartan appearance, its purely utilitarian. The dash

contains the standard military instruments and instruction plates. The shifting levers are to the right of the driver. The floor, unlike most other off-road vehicles is completely flat. When seated in the driving position, you get a sports car feeling. Seats are a semi-bucket design, non-adjustable and firm. Additional seating facilities are provided by folding down bench-type back rests located over the rear wheel wells. Tool storage is available within the walls of the wheel wells. A tailgate is hinged to the rear of the body. The windshield is fully demountable and folds down. Lifting clevis' are mounted at each end of the front and rear bumpers and a pintle hook facilitates towing loads. The unusual grill arrangement is a adjustable shutter for

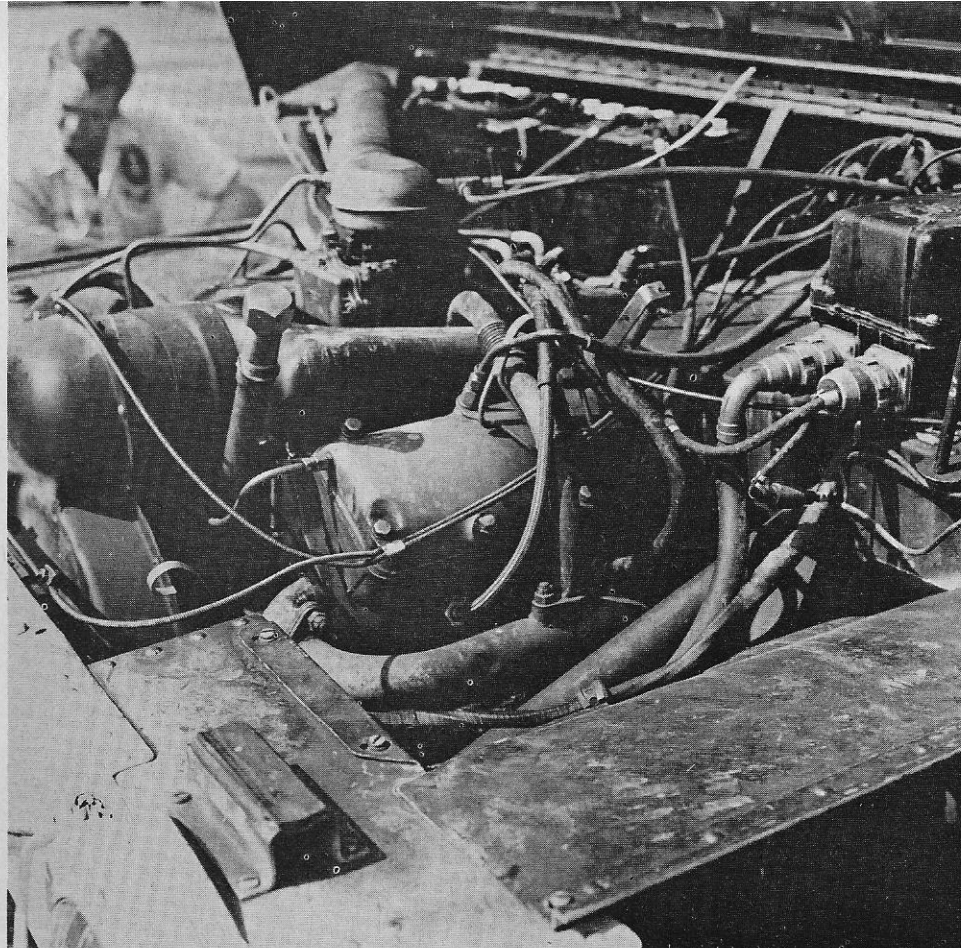


regulating engine temperatures. To reduce weight many areas including the wheels have been skeletonized. The batteries and lighting circuit system are a 24-volt submersible type. Brakes are of the conventional hydraulic type with the parking brake being mechanical and mounted to the rear of the transfer. Existing

tires on the "Mite" are the standard military type, non-directional mud and snow in 6.00 x 16 size.

Search as we did we could not locate a provision for a spare tire. Finally arriving into the daylight of reality we found to our surprise there is none! As long as the rear tires are in-





flated the "Mite" can hobble in! A flat rear tire could be exchanged for an inflated front tire and it would do. However, combat expediencies aside, a spare could be mounted in the Jeep or Land Rover style. Another item beyond our gaze were provisions for a top. A canvas take down or permanent type could easily be adapted.

Taking the "Mite" for a spin is quite a sensation. As its name implies, its performance is quick and seat pinning. Rounding curves is like that of a sports car, no lean or roll-over sensation. Gearing is low and highway speeds up around 55 mph is really pushing the "Mite". An overdrive on this rig could conjure up illusions of this rig being the poor man's off-road Porsche. Visibility is excellent and the short hood allows the driver the closest/shortest view of the road of any of the four wheelers except the cab-overs.

To express the thrill of driving a "Mighty Mite" frankly, "it's a gas". To further illustrate the fondness one can acquire for this smallest of the military wheeled vehicles, Adlen has sold his goodied up, custom 283 Chevy powered CJ-5.

We at FOUR WHEELER wonder the effect of a commercial version of this type rig on the American public?

TABULATED DATA

Vehicle weight w/o crew	1700 lb.
Pay load, highway	2780 lb.
Pay load, cross-country	2630 lb.
Towed load, highway	1500 lb.
Wheelbase	65 or 71 in.
Length	113 in.
Width	61 in.
Ground Clearance	9 in.
Angle of approach	55 degrees
Angle of departure	47 degrees
Maximum Gradient Ability	60 percent
Cruise range, miles (12.5 gal. tank)	225
Tire pressure, highway	front 20 psi rear 25 psi
Maximum recommended speeds	
4th - 55 mph	
3rd - 30 mph	
2nd - 20 mph	
1st - 10 mph	

In case anyone is interested, the federal stock number for the "Mite" is 2320-753-0103. Just kidding of course, only a limited amount were built, but who knows, maybe a brand-new one is still hiding somewhere in a musky warehouse.