

# GMC TYPHOON

Whoosh!

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PHOTOS BY RON SESSIONS

**P**ause a moment in silent remembrance of the Syclone—that wacky turbocharged wonder truck that rocketed GMC into the realm of the performance leaders. Here for only two model years, the Syclone is dead, dead, dead in 1993.

Long live the Typhoon; the Syclone's only son and heir.

The Typhoon is the natural follow-up to the Syclone. In fact, to many, the Typhoon makes more sense than the Syclone ever did. It's a 2-door Jimmy fortified with all-wheel drive, amplified by a turbocharger, and inspired by impudence. No truck should be this fast, and thank God this one is.

Everything about the Typhoon is subordinate to its invincible engine. A turbocharged and inter-

cooled version of the 4.3-liter ohv V-6 available in "regular" Jimmys, it produces 285 bhp and twists out an incredible 360 lb-ft of torque. There is some turbo lag, but most of this engine is pure whoosh.

Behind the engine sits the 4L60 transmission (700R4 to hot-rod-ders), which was the transmission found in late-model (pre-LT1) Corvettes. This transmission, like the rest of the truck, is tuned for performance, with solid kicks engaging each gear. From there power travels to a Borg-Warner 4472 all-wheel-drive transfer case that turns the turbo power into maximum usable thrust by distributing power to all four wheels through a viscous coupling. Without the all-wheel-drive system, it's likely the Jimmy chassis would be overwhelmed by the power.

The all-wheel-drive traction makes the Typhoon one of the hardest launching vehicles around. From a dead stop, nothing blasts off like a Typhoon. This is what everyone means when they talk about neck-snapping acceleration.

Like the Syclone, the Typhoon gets its performance and character by ingeniously raiding the GM parts bin. The all-wheel-drive unit was developed for GMC's Safari midi-van. The shifter, like the transmission, is from the Corvette. The load-leveling portion of the rear suspension was purloined from the Cadillac Brougham, and the instrument cluster is a Pontiac Sunbird Turbo piece. What's surprising is how well it all works, and how cohesive it appears.

The suspension itself is basic 4x4 Jimmy, lowered and tweaked for

maximum road-holding ability. The independent torsion-bar front suspension and leaf-sprung solid rear axle hardly qualify as exotic, but the all-wheel-drive system and the standard Firestone Firehawk SVX P245/50VR-16 tires on 16x8-in. aluminum wheels do a tremendous job of masking its limitations. As with most trucks, the steering is slow, with a good deal of initial understeer that the Typhoon pulls through.

Its all-wheel drive and general specification are similar to the off-road Jimmy, but that does not mean the Typhoon is an off-roader. It was built for the street; its relatively low suspension, high-strung engine, and street-performance tires leave it unsuited to trail-busting or mudbogging.

Stopping the 3800-lb missile is a 4-wheel anti-lock braking system

incorporating discs at the front and drums at the rear. They're adequate, though prone to fade after repeated hard use. The brick-like aerodynamics of the boxy body must help slow the onslaught somewhat.

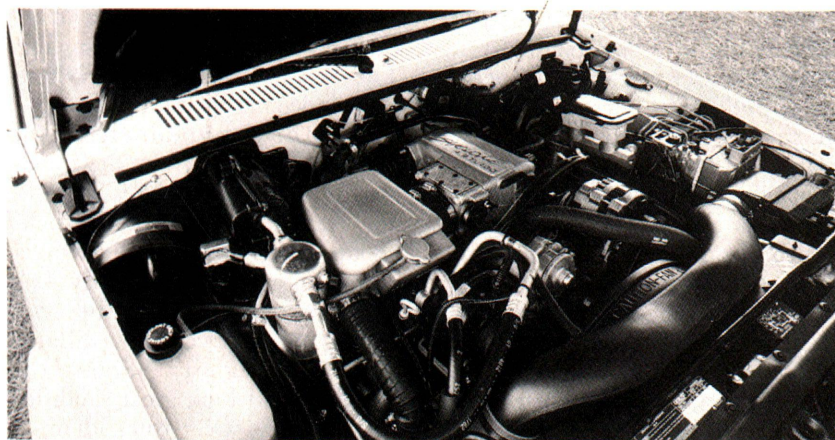
The aerodynamics may hardly be dynamic, but the truck looks nasty. The deep skirts, integral fog lamps and monochromatic intensity make for a seriously muscular statement. Unlike the Syclone, which was available only in black, the Typhoon can be had in a number of shades, including teal and white. There aren't quite enough colors to constitute a rainbow, but it's a cornucopia of choice compared to the sinister ebony Syclone.

Inside, the Typhoon is mix of Cadillac, Corvette and truck. The upholstery's rich leather, power doodads, blizzard-producing cli-

mate control and powerful stereo say Cadillac. The round instruments and stout shifter say Corvette. The oversize steering wheel and occasionally chintzy switch gear say compact truck.

Because of the load-leveling suspension, all the room in the Typhoon can be used. With a 900-lb payload, it can function as an Explorer substitute during the week, perfectly adept at schlepping the kids and commuting. On the weekend, it can replace the Corvette.

GMC plans to build only 2500 Typhoons during 1993, and they're not cheap. But General Motors' profitability is not riding on this truck, so its importance to the company has more to do with image than dollars. If a hyperkinetic sport-utility fits your image, the Typhoon is the only choice.



## SPECIFICATIONS

Base price, base model	\$29,320
Country of origin/assembly	U.S.A.
Body/seats	2D/4
Layout	F/awd
Wheelbase	100.5 in.
Track, f/r	57.8/58.0 in.
Length	170.3 in.
Width	68.2 in.
Height	60.0 in.
Minimum ground clearance	7.1 in.
Curb weight	3800 lb
Maximum towing capacity	na
Gross vehicle weight rating	4700 lb
Cargo capacity	15.0-33.0 cu ft
Fuel capacity	20.0 gal.
Fuel economy (EPA city/highway)	14/16 mpg
Base engine	4.3L 285-bhp ohv turbo V-6
Bore x stroke	101.6 x 88.4 mm
Displacement	4298 cc
Compression ratio	8.35:1
Horsepower, SAE net	285 bhp @ 4400 rpm
Torque	360 lb-ft @ 3600 rpm
Optional engine(s)	none
Transmission	4A
Final drive ratio	3.42:1
Suspension, f/r	ind/live
Brakes, f/r	disc/drum, ABS
Base tires	P245/50VR-16
Steering type	recirculating ball (p)
Turning circle	39.4 ft
Warranty, years/miles:	
Bumper-to-bumper	3/36,000
Powertrain	3/50,000
Rust-through	6/100,000
na means information not available	