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**MINI TRUCK MATCH UP:
TOYOTA SR-5 VS. MAZDA ROTARY**



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COMPARING ONE TRUCK with another is something which we enjoy doing and which we feel is valuable for the reader who is considering buying. In this case, we set out to compare what we think are the two best performance trucks in the mini pickup field. The 1974 PV4 Truck of the Year Award was given to the Toyota Hi-Lux and the Engineering Achievement Award went to the Mazda Rotary. That was a close decision and ever since we finally came down on one side of the fence, we have been wanting to do a comparison of the two.

The Toyota SR-5 is a 1975 model which is just making its debut. It is a truck built specifically for the U.S. market and will not be available in Japan. It is built to be a sport truck and has the new 2200-cc engine with which all Toyota pickups will be equipped for '75, a 5-speed transmission with the fifth gear being an overdrive, custom high-back bucket seats and deep out-pile carpeting. It also gets some

stripes along the sides to set it off from its more conventional brothers and the letters "SR-5" on the tailgate. One of the most important developments is that it utilizes front disc brakes, which we note with pure exhilaration.

The Mazda we were loaned for this test was a 1974 model because the '75 Mazdas won't be arriving for awhile yet. We went into an explanation of what makes the Mazda so outstanding in the July '74 issue of PV4 when we presented the Engineering Achievement Award. The Wankel rotary engine makes performance the name of the game for the Mazda, along with excellent detailing of the cab and body and nice comfort features. All in all, a truly exceptional mini pickup.

So, here we have two of what we think are the best of the mini trucks you can buy and we decided we should take them both out together and put them through their paces. In the end, we hoped we would be able to say which is the better truck.





We were able to get off the pavement with the Mazda Rotary and the Toyota SR-5 in both the desert and the mountains. The high altitude affected the Toyota to a greater degree. Both of the minis are excellent off pavement run-arounds and thrifty.

We began the comparison with a visit to Orange County International Raceway where the Mazda achieved the best marks in acceleration performance and the two were about equal in the other tests. The Wankel RX-4 engine is really a sweetheart when it comes to nailing the gas and getting response. No stumbling, no choking, gasping, wheezing, burping or other rude noises. Just smoothly delivered power that gets up and goes. And it got up and went to the tune of zero to 60 mph in just 11.0 seconds.

The Toyota 2200 engine moves the vehicle right out, too, but with a little less of the "kick-in-the-rear" feel of the Mazda. We took 14.6 seconds to get 60 mph with the SR-5. Just for comparison, that 14.6 figure is nearly four full seconds faster than the 6-cylinder Scout II we tested in the May '74 PV4 and two seconds faster than the Datsun mini pickup tested in the August issue. So, it's not that the Toyota is slow by any means, it's just that the Mazda is damn quick.

In braking ability, both of the little devils have front discs and they work quite well once they are broken in. We had a surprise the first time we did the panic stop test when we used up nearly 200 feet with each of the trucks. We realized, however, that the brakes were so new they had not been properly seated so, after we tromped on 'em several times, they shaped up. Anyway, the net result was that there was little to choose between them in the matter of braking ability although the Toyota did exhibit less fade than the Mazda.

Okay, enough of the truck stuff. What's really important to most of us is what's it going to be like when we get out on the road or off the pavement.

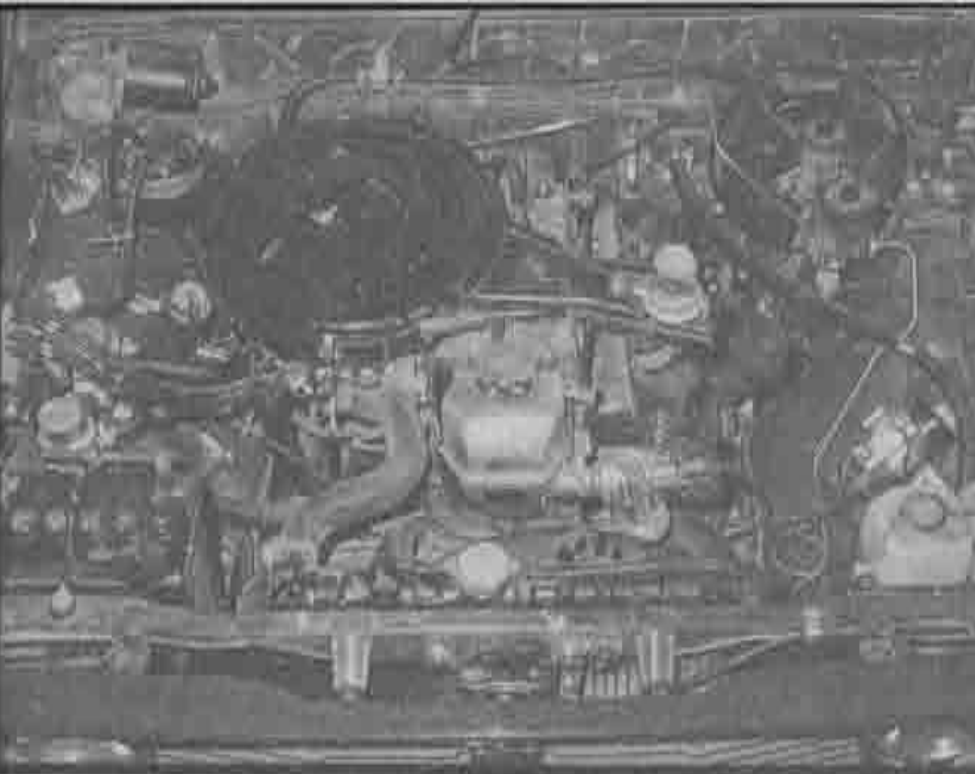
We decided to shoot the cover photograph on a dry lake bed in the Mojave Desert so we could try some trick photography. Well, as you may have noticed, the cover picture is rather standard so we still have a few things to learn about trick photography. We think, however, we know quite a lot about trucks and that's what we're here for.

The Toyota SR-5 is almost totally pleasant to drive on the highway and around town. The ride is firm and the handling is exceptionally good with little sway. It tracks in a straight line and gives a good account of itself. Just running down the list,



The interior of the Mazda is as nicely finished as any vehicle in the PV4 world. Console is optional as is the radio.

the engine is smoother than last year's model, the 5-speed gear box functions with fluidity although you may find that the throw between gears is rather short and some drivers had occasion to hit fifth when they were shooting for third. The ventilation system is one of the best of all the minis with in-clubhouse mounted vents that get air onto your body rather than down around your ankles all the time. The instrument panel is



It may be hard to believe but that is a 4-cylinder, overhead cam engine of 2200-cc displacement. Toyota makes it clean enough to skip the converter.



The Mazda has the Wankel-designed rotary engine with lots of horsepower.



The SR-5 interior is excellent. Carpeting replaces the rubber floor mats and high-back bucket seats are available.

perhaps the best of all and everything is either within easy reach or can be read without hunting and searching.

In terms of driver comfort, the new high-back bucket seats drew about equal amounts of praise and criticism. Some staffers felt they were pitched forward too far in the backrest area and the Art Director, at the end of a tiring day of directing the photography effort, found it difficult to snuggle down and go to sleep in the passenger's seat. On the other hand, the Editor spent the entire day driving the SR-5 and realized that there was none of the customary back tiredness or aching. So, for driving they are keen—for sleeping you may want to bring along a large pillow.

The carpeting YAHOO for the carpeting. Finally, a Toyota without those damn rubber floor mats that invariably end up in a ball around the pedals. The rugs are nice and soft and they

don't show the dirt nearly as badly as the mats. No matter how much the SR-5 package costs, the carpeting is worth it.

One final item. The new bucket seats do seem to cut down a bit on the leg room for the taller driver in the Toyota.

Turning to the Mazda Rotary, it is more fun to drive. The accelerative ability of the Wankel engine is hard to beat for its size. It's so smooth! It just seems to thrive on being wound up to about five or six grand on the tach in each gear and for us that's hard to beat. Remember the old high school days in your coupe (ku-pay), roadster or sedan (see-dan) when you used to give your chick a thrill by blowing the doors off some other stud's car? Well, some of us, we guess, have never outgrown that to a certain extent and the Mazda is for us. Man, you should see the surprise on some people's faces when you just sail on by with hardly a whisper.

Let's turn to some of the other features of the Mazda before we get so worked up we run out and buy a jar of barch wax. The Mazda is finished inside and out as nicely as any pickup, van or 4-wheel drive available these days. There is carpeting rather than floor mats, fake-wood dash applique, a tachometer and other goodies. We don't find the controls quite as easy to use as those of the Toyota and the instrument layout is not read as easily.

The interior of the Mazda is considerably smaller than the Toyota and the leg room is a bit cramped. The headroom is good, though, and it should not be a problem for drivers who are not well over 6-ft tall.

Now, we've finally arrived at the desert and it's time to get off the pavement. The Mazda is a clear-cut winner in this area. The Toyota is good and it performs well but the suspension is overly stiff. In fact, it's so stiff that we were unable to climb one dirt hill which the Mazda and a '74 Toyota Longbed pickup went up without any problems. This was a total surprise to us because we had radial tires which had been let down to a nice pressure for off-road driving. However, every time we got to a spot with loose dirt on this hill, the back end commenced the most godawful jumping up and down you can imagine. The hill in this spot was also rather potholed so we couldn't just take a flying run at it and go on. It was a case of

TOYOTA SR-5

PRICES

Basic list, West Coast POE

Price not available at press time.

Standard Equipment: 133-cu.in. sole 4-cyl engine, 5-spd manual transmission, AM radio, tinted glass, power front disc brakes, high-back bucket seats, carpeting, pin striping, heater/delivers, 2-spd electric wiper/washers, tool kit, 185SR x 14 steel belted radial tires

ENGINES

Standard 133-cu.in. sole 4-cyl
 Bore x stroke, in. 3.48 x 3.50
 Compression ratio 8.4:1
 Net horsepower @ rpm 90 @ 4800
 Net torque @ rpm, lb-ft 120 @ 2800
 Type fuel required .. heated or unleaded

DRIVE TRAIN

Standard transmission 5-spd manual
 Transmission ratios: 5th 0.85:1
 4th 1.00:1
 3rd 1.30:1
 2nd 2.04:1
 1st 3.28:1
 Synchronizer all forward gears
 Optional none
 Rear axle type semi-floating hypoid
 Final drive ratios: 4.375:1
 Overdrive 5th gear
 Limited slip differential none

ACCELERATION

Time to speed, sec:
 0-30 mph 4.8
 0-45 mph 9.0
 0-60 mph 14.6
 0-70 mph 19.5
 Standing start, 1/4-mile, sec 18.8
 Speed at end, mph 72

CHASSIS & BODY

Body/frame: ladder-type frame with separate steel body
 Brakes (std): front, 10.8-in. dia disc rear, 10 x 2.125-in. drums
 Brake swept area, sq in. 302
 Swept area/ton (max load) 155
 Power brakes std
 Steering type (std) recirculating ball
 Steering ratio (variable) 18.5/21.8
 Power steering none
 Turning circle, ft 34.1
 Wheel size (std): front, 14 x 5J; rear, 14 x 5.5J
 Optional wheel size none
 Tire size (std) 185SR x 14
 Optional tire size none

SUSPENSION

Front suspension: independent with A-arms, coil springs, stabilizer bar and tube shocks
 Front axle capacity, lb 1875
 Optional none
 Rear suspension: semi-elliptic leaf springs on live axle and tube shocks
 Rear axle capacity, lb 3640
 Optional none
 Additional suspension options: none

ACCOMMODATION

Standard seats high-back bucket seats
 Optional seats none
 Headroom in 36.0
 Pedal to seatback, max 45.0

Steering wheel to seatback, max 18.2
 Seat to ground 25.2
 Floor to ground 15.4
 Unobstructed load space (length x width x height) in 72 x 38 x 16
 Tailgate (width x height) 61.5 x 19

INSTRUMENTATION

Instrumentation: speedometer, odometer, fuel gauge
 Warning lights: oil pressure, water temp, alternator, brake system warning, hazard warning
 Optional none

GENERAL

Curb weight, lb (test model) 2570
 GVWR (test model) 3890
 Optional GVWRs none
 Wheelbase, in. 101.6
 Track, front/rear 52.2/50.8
 Overall length 168.7
 Overall height 61.3
 Overall width 62.2
 Overhang, front/rear 29/38
 Approach angle, degree 30
 Departure angle 29
 Ground clearance (test model):
 Front axle 7.6
 Rear axle 7.6
 Oil pan 10.1
 Fuel tank 10.0
 Exhaust system (lowest point) 8.1
 Fuel tank capacity (U.S. gal) 12.1
 Auxiliary tank none

PERFORMANCE DATA

TEST MODEL

SR-5 with all standard equipment
 Price not available at press time.

SPEED IN GEARS

High, 5th (4500 rpm) 84
 4th (5000 rpm) 81
 3rd (5000 rpm) 59
 2nd (5000 rpm) 40
 1st (5000 rpm) 24
 Engine rpm @ 55 mph 2800

BRAKE TESTS

Pedal pressure required for 1/2-g deceleration rate from 60 mph, lb 22
 Stopping distance from 60 mph, ft 193
 Fade: Percent increase in pedal pressure for 6 stops from 60 mph 36
 Overall brake rating good

INTERIOR NOISE

Idle in neutral, dBA 63
 Maximum during acceleration 79
 At steady 60 mph cruising speed 76

OFF PAVEMENT

Hillclimbing ability poor
 Maneuverability excellent
 Turnaround capability excellent
 Handling excellent
 Ride good

ON PAVEMENT

Handling very good
 Ride good
 Driveability very good
 Driver comfort very good
 Engine response very good

FUEL CONSUMPTION

Normal driving, mpg 18.2
 Off pavement 14.6
 Range, normal driving, miles 220
 Range, off pavement 175

MAZDA ROTARY

PRICES

Basic list, West Coast POE	
RX-4 rotary pickup	\$3495
Standard Equipment: 80-cu-in. rotary engine, 4-spd manual transmission, cab carpeting, rally wheels, full instrumentation, engine oil cooler, backup lights, tinted glass, heater/defroster, 2-spd electric wiper/washers, 7.35 x 14C tires	

ENGINES

Standard	80-cu-in. rotary
Bore x stroke, in.	40-cu-in. rotors
Compression ratio	9.2:1
Net horsepower @ rpm	110 @ 6000
Net torque @ rpm, lb-ft.	117 @ 3500
Type fuel required	leaded or unleaded
Optional	none

DRIVETRAIN

Standard transmission	4-spd manual
Clutch dia., in.	8.5
Transmission ratios: 4th	1.00:1
3rd	1.40:1
2nd	2.26:1
1st	3.88:1
Synchromesh	all forward gears
Optional 3-spd automatic	\$270
Transmission ratios: 3rd	1.00:1
2nd	1.46:1
1st	2.46:1
Rear axle type	anti-flooting hypoid
Final drive ratios: 4.625:1 (4-spd), 4.375:1 (automatic)	
Overdrive	none
Limited slip differential	none

CHASSIS & BODY

Body/frame	ladder-type frame with separate steel body
Brakes (std)	front, 10.0-in. dia. disc; rear, 10.2-in. drums
Brake swept area, sq in.	303
Swept area/ton (max load)	148
Power brakes	std
Steering type (std)	reciprocating ball
Steering ratio	17.6:1
Power steering	none
Turning circle, ft	38
Wheel size (std)	14 x 5.5
Optional wheel sizes	none
Tire size (std)	7.35 x 14C
Optional tire sizes	none

SUSPENSION

Front suspension	independent A-arms with coil springs and tube shocks
Front axle capacity, lb	1715
Optional	none
Rear suspension	semi-elliptic leaf springs on live axle with tube shocks
Rear axle capacity, lb	2600
Optional	none
Additional suspension options	none

ACCOMMODATION

Standard seats	full width bench
Optional seats	none
Headroom, in.	35.5
Pedal to seatback, max	40.3
Steering wheel to seatback, max	16.2
Seat to ground	26.0
Floor to ground	15.5

Unobstructed load space (length x width x height) in.	75 x 42.8 x 16
Tailgate (width x height)	55.5 x 16

INSTRUMENTATION

Instruments	speedometer, odometer, re-arrangeable trip odometer, tachometer, fuel gauge, ammeter, water temp, oil pressure
Warning lights	brake system warning, hazard warning, exhaust system overheat warning, parking brake
Optional	none

GENERAL

Curb weight, lb (test model)	2800
GVWR (test model)	4120
Optional GVWRs	4130 (with automatic)
Wheelbase, in.	104
Track, front/rear	57/58
Overall length	173
Overall height	61
Overall width	67
Overhang, front/rear	28/43
Approach angle, degrees	33
Departure angle	21
Ground clearances (test model):	
Front axle	8.0
Rear axle	8.0
Oil pan	10.4
Fuel tank	9.8
Exhaust system (lowest point)	7.8
Fuel tank capacity (U.S. gal)	20.8
Auxiliary tank	none

PERFORMANCE DATA

TEST MODEL

RX-4 rotary, 4-spd manual transmission, AM radio, stripe kit, console cover, rear step bumper, side mirrors, center console, 4.625:1 rear axle ratio, 7.35 x 14C tires	
West Coast list price	\$3900

ACCELERATION

Time to speed, sec.	
0-30 mph	3.6
0-45 mph	6.4
0-60 mph	11.0
0-70 mph	15.4
Standard start, 1/4 mile, sec.	17.3
Speed at end, mph	77

SPEED IN GEARS

4th (5000 rpm)	92
3rd (5000 rpm)	70
2nd (6000 rpm)	42
1st (6000 rpm)	26
Engine rpm @ 65 mph	3600

BRAKE TESTS

Pedal pressure required for 1-g deceleration rate from 60 mph, lb	32
Stopping distance from 60 mph, ft.	165
Fade: Percent increase in pedal pressure for 8 stops from 60 mph	87
Overall brake rating	very good

INTERIOR NOISE

Idle in neutral, dBA	54
Maximum during acceleration	77
At steady 60 mph cruising speed	74

OFF PAVEMENT

Ride/climbing ability	very good
Maneuverability	excellent
Turnaround capability	excellent
Handling	excellent
Ride	very good

ON PAVEMENT

Handling	very good
Ride	very good
Driver visibility	very good
Driver comfort	good
Engine response	excellent

FUEL CONSUMPTION

Normal driving, mpg	16.3
Off pavement	13.0
Range, normal driving, miles	339
Range, off pavement	270