

# New Ford Econoline E20 a real attention-getter

(From page 17)

Leaf Gardens.  
The dashboard looked like it came right out of a Taurus complete with the driver's air bag as standard. There is a large speedometer straight ahead flanked by white on black gauges for oil pressure, water temp, ammeter and fuel level. To the right are the heater/ventilation controls and below that an AM radio with clock. With a load height (floor level) at 742 mm (29.2 inches) empty you can imagine the towering view of the road ahead. That sensation is heightened by a roofline which is no less than 2,18 mm (83.4 inches) off the road.

Braking is power assisted with anti-lock on the rear wheels. Tires on the E250 range are LT225.75R 16s. My test van came with the optional (\$379) four-speed automatic transmission and the 3.73 regular rear axle. This, combined with the inline six and its 265 ft/lbs of torque at only 2,000 rpm, allowed for a payload of 1,610 kgs (3,550 lbs), which is more than a German Heinkel bomber could carry during World War II.

The list price on the van is \$18,795 and the only options were \$302 for the swing-out side glass on the cargo door, \$50 for a block heater, \$43 for deluxe insulation, \$176 for a light group, and \$100 for chrome bumpers adding up to a grand total of \$20,595.

Of course size is critical. You can walk around in the cargo area of this vehicle standing almost fully erect. All doors, including the swing out twins at the back have simple latches which make it easy to open with your arms full. I also appreciate the body on frame design. Frankly, this is the way to build cars and trucks. Yes, it's heavier, but I always have a sense of security knowing there's a stout frame beneath me.

Not only are the instruments and seats car-like, but the ride is a world away from the teeter-totter feeling of the old beam axles front and rear.

With all that torque, getting away from a traffic light comes with such gusto that many of muscledrivers were caught unawares. Unladen, the Regular Van is no slouch either on highway entry ramps. Excessive


body roll used to be the Achilles' heel of any van, particularly with the body perched up on leaf springs - a system virtually unchanged from the horse and buggy days. The Econoline has computer-selected coils and gas-charged shocks on Twin I-beams at the front with computer-selected leaf springs and gas shocks at the rear. You can also option up to a heavy-duty system. All of this translates into a surprisingly supple ride.

I was surprised at just how many people on my street came over to take a look at the E250. The Econoline has always been a workhorse on the Canadian scene, and I guess people can spot the new one following its major renovation for the 1993

model year.

That interest was not lost on me either. If a truck can attract the atten-

tion of people to that extent, then Ford in building what many consumers want in the E250 Econoline.



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All dressed up (in Bright White) and ready to go to work is the E250 Ford Econoline which underwent a major renovation for the 1993 model year to make it more car-like to drive, but retain colossal cargo volumes.

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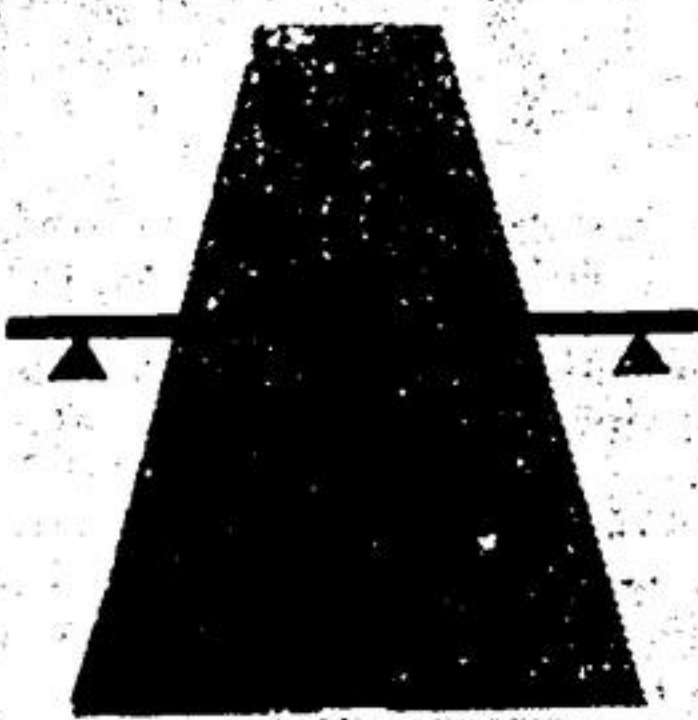


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