

Eagle Summit sedan a pleasure to drive in any traffic

(From page 11)

Mitsubishi for Chrysler, I was about price again) because it had Dodge Colt. Built in Japan by attracted by price (yes there I go air and power accessories in the

under \$15,000 bracket.

But what really amazed me was how handy and zippy the car was on the highway. When I go to Shannonville, I don't test drive on the track because it proves nothing about how the car responds for you and I in the real world of two-lane traffic.

For 1993, the Summit has been completely reworked and remains on a par in terms of size, performance and concept with Corolla/Civic/Sentra it's major competitors in the Japanese home market. Styling is neither radical nor outdated. It has euro-induced lines following the current Japanese vogue of trying to round out every spot that was once sharply creased in the days of wedge styling.

Inside, the Summit uses one of those sweeping, upside down L-shaped dashboards pioneered by Saab in the 9000 and now almost universal in Japanese sedans. It features a semi-circular main instrument cluster which flows into a central console "stalk" for heat/air controls, radio/cassette and miscellaneous things like cigarette lighter/ashtray and/or power point for your radar detector CB unit.

I particularly enjoyed the generous size, travel, and adjustment of the front seats, and the roominess Mitsubishi engineers have created in the back even with the 60/40 split folding rear seat.

As I found the previous year in the standout Summit wagon, the cloth has an expensive feel and you notice the quality of the plastics is also top drawer.

The Eagle Summit comes in the aforementioned wagon, a two-door coupe and four-door sedan. The coupe and sedan have two trim levels, base "DL" and compre-

hensively-equipped "ES" as presented to us at Shannonville. Both cars are front-engined and front-drive.

The DL comes with a 12-valve, four-cylinder with five-speed manual or three-speed automatic. The three-speed autobox is optional on the ES coupe but I can't imagine who would want it. The 1.5-litre engine in the DL produces 92 horses and 93 torques.

Step into the ES and you get a 1.8-litre, 16-valve four with 113 hp and 116 torques. Transaxle choices are a five-speed manual or a four-speed overdrive automatic as an option. The 1.8 engine is available as an option on the DL.

This is Canada with 100 km/h superhighways and I think the 1.8-litre should be made standard just to keep up to the flow of traffic.

The first thing you notice is how fast the engine climbs the rev counter and how quick you're suddenly going.

The car is a delight in any type of traffic. It's quick enough to edge out the guy in the 350-cubic-inch beater who's trying to cut you off, yet easy enough on fuel to require only two fillups during the time I had it.

Trunk space is big enough for the playpen and folded stroller, but not much else.

Price, this is the best part. The coupe base and ES list at \$9,805 and \$10,250 respectively, while the sedan base and ES are \$12,355 and \$13,305. My four-door ES with a host of options like air conditioning came to \$15,439.

The Eagle Summit may not be the first name that pops into your mind when you think small, imported economy car, but it sure is worth taking a look at.

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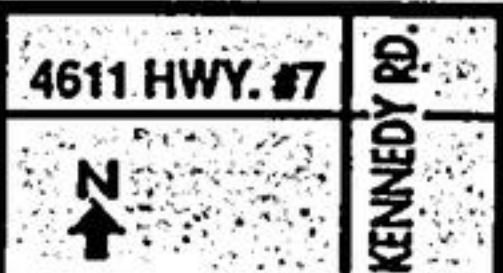
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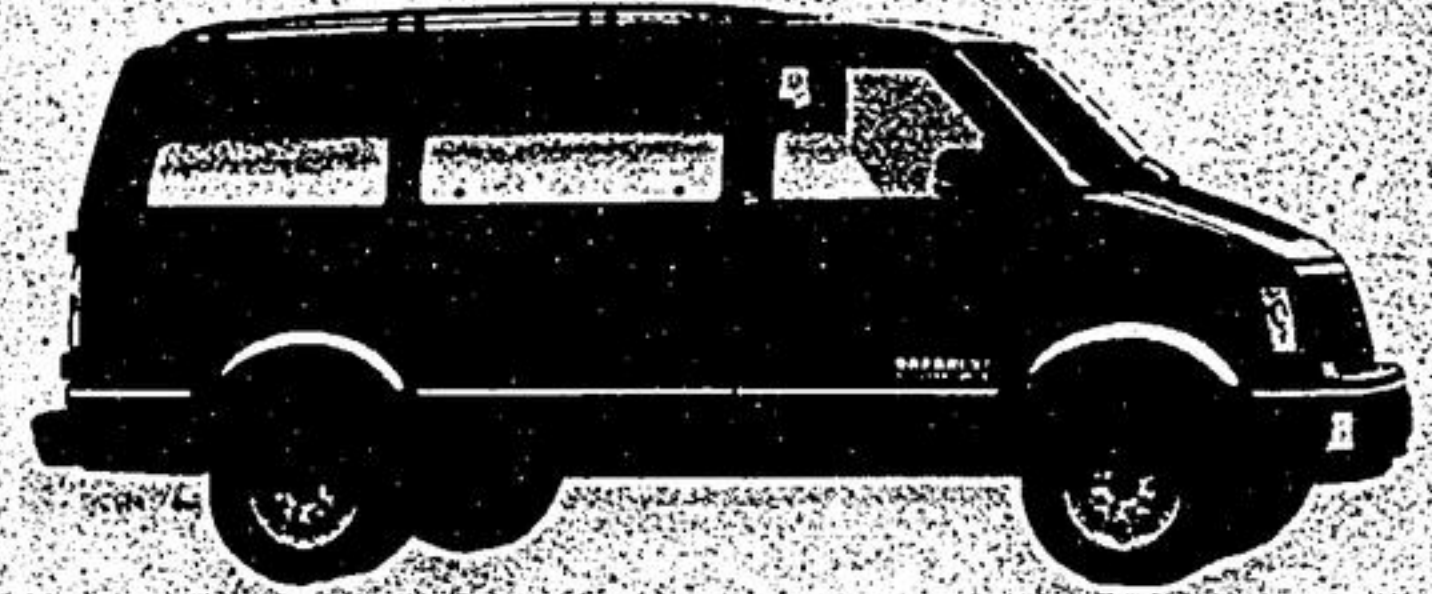
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