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→JUNKYARD CRAWL AM-EXIT WOUNDS

By Steve Magnante / Photos: Steve Magnante

There's something totally shocking about finding an AMX in the junkyard. It's like finding a Corvette. After all, along with Chevy's plastic fantastic, the AMX was America's only other two-seat model during the first generation's brief '68 to '70 model run.

Here's a solid '70 AMX we found at Desert Valley Auto Parts in Phoenix (dvap.com). Though it's a bone-dry desert diamond, the sad fact is it's missing many vital parts, and collector prices are still too modest for the project to be anything other than a labor of love. But if you're like us, you love these things. Go git!



Missing the drivetrain, interior, glass, and all-important domed hood, the rust-free body would still be a good starting point for a restomod. We're seeing a slammed Trans Am-inspired machine with a stroked 401 and Keisler six-speed conversion. Gotta have the Mark Donahue red, white, and blue stripe job. Dig the straight front bumper and power disc brake goodies.



Though the weepy 225hp 290 four-barrel was standard in AMXs for '68 and '69 (the 280hp 343 and 315hp 390 were options), for '70, AMC upped the ante and made the 290hp 360 the standard AMX mill, with the 325hp 390 available in reserve for extra coin. Too bad the 401 didn't arrive until 1971, when the Javelin AMX was redesigned as a much larger car and it grew a rear seat.



We love AMC VIN tags 'cause they contain all the vital data. This X's tag reads ADC997P156106. That breaks down to: A = AMC, O = 1970, C = console-mounted shift command automatic transmission, 3 = AMX series, 9 = two-door hardtop, 7 = AMX (and Javelin SST) body class, and P = 360 four-barrel. The final six digits make up the production sequence number. If only the C were an M and the P an X, then we'd be looking at a four-speed 390 car.

GROOVY FACTOIDS

- The first-generation two-seat AMX rides on a 97-inch wheelbase—that's only an inch more than the stubby Gremlin's 96-inch wheelbase.
- Everybody thinks of AMC as finishing last in the sales race, but in 1970 AMC sold 242,821 cars—ahead of totals posted by Imperial (11,816), Lincoln (53,127), Chrysler (180,767), and Cadillac (236,239).