

1974 Dagin Cord 814 Phaeton

Vehicle Highlights

- Cord 810 Phaeton Replica; Built in 1970s
- Chassis: DMC1974001
- Chevrolet 350ci V8; Rebuilt TH400 Automatic
- Corvette C3 Stretched Chassis; Fiberglass Body
- Stored Early 1980s-2016
- Recently Refurbished; Rebuilt Carburetor, Refreshed Brakes and Fuel System

This Dagin 814 is a full-size Cord 810 Phaeton replica that was envisioned and built by Daniel Ginsberg in the 1970s. The intention was to build a series of these cars to market and sell them as the Cord 814, which was what the Auburn Automobile Company had intended to call the 1938 model had it been produced. The fiberglass body was constructed using molds taken from a 1936 Cord Phaeton, and the heavily-modified C3 Corvette chassis was lengthened by 28 inches to fit underneath. A number of original Cord components were used to complete the build, and Mr. Ginsberg drove the car for number of years before placing it into storage from the early 1980s. After his passing in late 2015, the Mr. Ginsberg's son returned the car to roadworthiness at a cost of over \$10k. The 350ci V8 was tuned-up, and the carburetor and TH400 transmission were rebuilt. The 4-wheel disc brakes and fuel system were also refurbished ahead of listing the car for sale. Period marketing material from the Dagin Motor Car Company was included in the sale, along with features in 1978 issues of GQ and Time magazines. The sale also includes paper and photographic records from the original build, as well as a number of spares and a clean California title in the seller's name.



According to the seller, the molds used to build the body of the Dagin were made sometime in the early 1970s by Vince Gardner, who was the assistant of Gordon Buehrig at the time of the design of the original 810/812 Cord. The fender molds came from Glenn Pray. All the molds were then acquired by Doc Merman before being purchased by the seller's father, who made a run of three sets of body parts, but only one hood.

The body parts are made of three layers of hand-laid fiberglass and are reportedly interchangeable with original Cord steel. According to Felix DeGeyter, a principal at the Auburn-Cord-Duesenberg Co. of Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, the Dagin was the first full sized Cord 810/812 replica that was completed, displayed, and roadworthy. Chips and scrapes are noted in the paint, and there are some cracks in fiberglass.

A genuine Cord fence (grille) was used to complete the build in the 1970s, though it was a non-supercharged version that was modified for outside pipes. The headlight buckets and retraction assemblies are also original items, as are the hand cranks. The bumpers are reproduction parts from Stan Gilliland of Auburn & Cord Parts in Wellington, Kansas, which is still in operation. The wide whitewall tires are newer, as are the wiper blades and arms.



The brake lights and turn signals are said to work, though the headlights are currently stuck closed and the windshield wipers do not function. The trunk liner was removed many years ago, though some of the pieces were included and will be used as a template for replacements.



The interior is also patterned after a Cord, including pleated leather front seats, rear seats, and door panels. The windshield was re-chromed, assembled, and installed during the refurbishment. The deteriorated top frame and cover are useful only as patterns, though an original oval rear window was included.

The door handles are Cord items, and the dash features dual locking glove compartments similar to the original cars. The power front windows work, though the rear quarter windows are missing. The radio and power antenna are intermittent according to the seller.

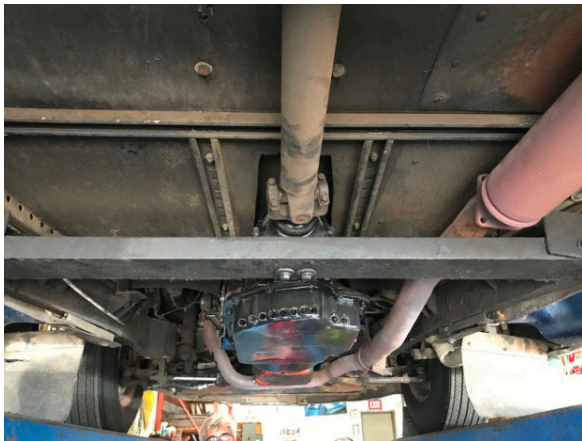


The engine-turned instrument panel is similar to a Cord, though incorporating Stewart Warner gauges and an AM/FM/8-track head unit. The tach, fuel gauge, volt meter, ammeter, oil pressure gauge, water temperature gauge, and clock work, though the speedometer is not hooked up and mileage is unknown as a result.

The 350ci Chevrolet V8 received a considerable amount of maintenance within the last two years to return the car to running condition. The carburetor was rebuilt and a tune-up included new plugs, wires, cap, rotor, and condenser. The fuel tank was also cleaned and resealed, and the TH400 automatic was rebuilt. A compression check reportedly showed about 130-140 psi across all cylinders. Additional new or remanufactured parts include:

- Radiator
- Fuel pump
- Starter
- Water pump
- Thermostat
- Ignition switch
- Air filter assembly
- Red Top Optima battery

The seller recalled assisting his father in the build of the car, which was completed at a municipal airport in Fairfield, New Jersey. The C3 Corvette chassis was lengthened to match the 125" Cord wheelbase. The Corvette full independent suspension and brakes were retained. Refurbishment work since 2016 also included an alignment and new brake calipers and pads all around, as well as a new brake master cylinder. The suspension bushings are worn and the power steering is said to leak.



The car was displayed for its debut at the annual ACD meet in Auburn, Indiana in September 1977. There, the seller's father met and posed with Cord 810/812 designer Gordon Buehrig for the photo seen above. In 1980, he drove the 814 to California with the intent of building more cars and selling them, though unfortunately the goal was never realized.

Original promotional material is retained, as are period write-ups in Time, GQ, and Automotive News magazines. These can all be seen in the museum along with handwritten production schedule records from the seller's father.

The car was also displayed at the West Coast Meet of the ACD club in summer 2018 as shown above. It is titled in California to the seller as a 1974 Dagin. Links to a couple of videos (including an extended cruise around town) are shown below.

Videos located at:

<https://vimeo.com/282414000>

<https://vimeo.com/282429164>