

# USA '85: ALL THE NEW CARS

CORVETTE IN EUROPE: NEW TECH BLITZES THE OLD WORLD

# MOTOR TREND

'85 PREVIEW TESTS

CAVALIER Z24 V-6

SHELBY CHARGER TURBO

210-HP MUSTANG GT

LE BARON GTS TURBO

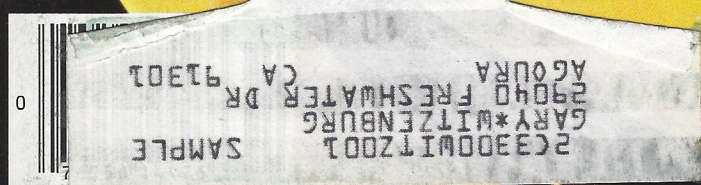
BUICK SOMERSET REGAL

OCTOBER 1984

## F=FASTER FANTASIES

GM'S F-CARS FOR 1985

Port-Injected Trans Am  
215-hp IROC-Z



2C3300W1T2001  
GARY\*WITZENBURG  
29040 FRESHWATER DR  
CA 91301  
AGOURA  
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## PREVIEW TEST

**E**ver since Lee Iacocca put a Rolls-Royce-look grille on an elegantly reskinned Thunderbird in 1968 and christened it Continental Mark III, the Lincoln Mark has been the company's ultimate luxury offering. Iacocca, Ford's passenger-car vice president at the time, says he was lying in bed one night, wondering what to do with excess capacity in the plant that produced what was then a very large and heavy T-Bird, when he hit upon the idea.

The Mark III, named for the two classic Continentals ('39-'48 and '56-'57) that preceded it, was a smash hit with the country-club set. It was followed by a larger Mark IV (the first with "opera" windows) in '72, a still larger Mark V in '77, and a slightly downsized (and malproportioned) Mark VI in '80, all characterized by carrier-class styling, ride, and handling and each representing a higher level of wretched excess and conspic-

uous consumption than the one before.

Which is why the '84 Mark VII was such a refreshing surprise. Besides its pleasing and slippery contours (Cd 0.38) and Eurostyle flush headlamps (America's first), it boasted a unique and wonderfully supple air-spring/gas shock suspension with four sturdy, Goodyear-developed rubber bags replacing the conventional springs and a computer-controlled pump adjusting their pressures continuously (both fore-aft and side-to-side) to compensate for changing conditions.

The result was a terrifically smooth ride, softer and less harsh than a big Mercedes, coupled with remarkable (for a Lincoln) handling capability. And, while the regular and designer-type Mark VII's were huge improvements over the wallowy marshmallow Marks of the past, the Eurostyle LSC version's tauter-still suspension was beginning to be a match for most of the luxury imports

on the market. A true driver's car, the black-trimmed, blackwalled, and alloy-wheeled LSC also came with quicker-ratio power steering, wider 15-in. alloy wheels, and a higher numerical rear axle to enhance performance from the 130-hp electronically fuel-injected 5.0-liter V-8. Out here in car- and status-crazy Southern California, the surprising LSC soon proved itself to be almost as happy on twisty, treacherous Mulholland Drive above Los Angeles as it was cruising serenely through Beverly Hills.

All the LSC needed, really, to bring it up to world-class luxury touring status, was a little more thrust at the other end of the throttle cable. So what do you suppose Ford Engineering gave it for its first birthday? Right: a *very* significant (55-hp) power boost—thanks to a new aluminum intake manifold—a higher flow-rate throttle body, tubular headers, dual exhausts, and a higher-performance

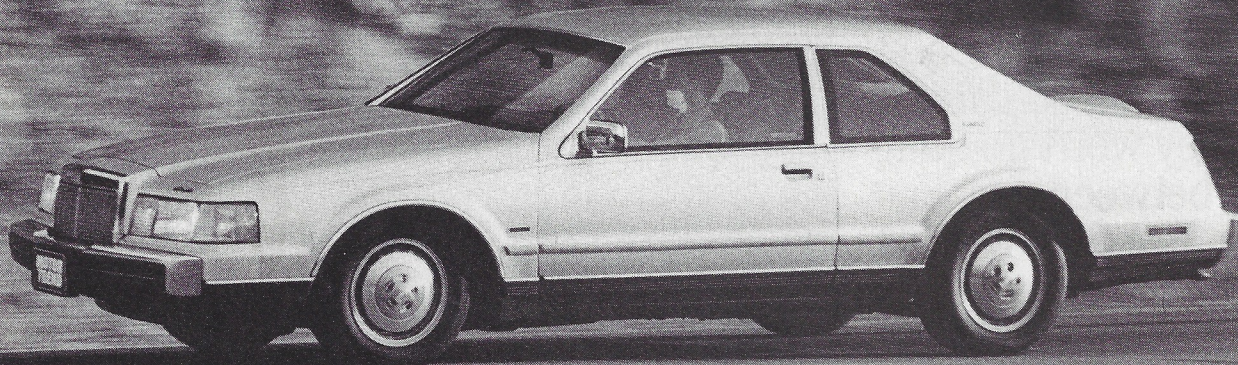
**Does it like no other Mark ever built**

# 1985 Lincoln Continental

## Mark VII LSC

by Gary Witzenburg

PHOTOGRAPHY BY VIC HUBER





## Hats off to Ford for being first among domestic manufacturers with anti-lock braking


camshaft. Also the U.S. industry's first computer-controlled 4-wheel anti-skid braking system, standard fog lamps under the front bumper (optional last year), and a set of new, more supportive articulated front bucket seats.

Flogging an '85 LSC around the handling course at Ford's Dearborn, Michigan, proving ground, we found it hard to believe that anything that said "Lincoln" on it could corner so hard and fast and be so much fun to drive. The 14.7:1 steering is quick and precise, and the big Eagle GT tires point the still-fairly-hefty Mark into turns like a running back avoiding tacklers. In classic rear-drive performance-car fashion, it could be throttle-steered into whatever attitude we wanted. For serious drivers, the LSC's grin quotient is right up there with GT and SVO Mustangs and the equally amazing LTD-LX hot-rod family sedan. We were able to get the fifth wheel on it for a brief instrumented test and found it appreciably quicker than last year's LSC: 9.43 sec 0-60 and 17.3 sec at 81.3 mph in the quarter mile versus 11.07 sec and 18.06 at 76.7 mph for the '84.

The leather-lined interior abounds with taste, class, and convenience instead of the expected fake wood and brightwork: door-mounted, Mercedes-

style power seat switches shaped like little seats in profile; visors recessed and latched into the headliner so they'll never sag; touchbutton electronic climate control; a marvelous multi-function Trip computer; a two-way joystick control for the twin power outside mirrors; dual intensity map lights, digital compass, outside thermometer, and warning lamps for

head-, tail-, and brakelights, all in an overhead console; a gimbaled drink-holder that pulls out of a lockable center console, which also houses a sectioned cassette tray and a deep storage bin. We'd appreciate a set of real instruments (instead of the standard digital speedo, odo, and fuel readouts) in the driver-oriented LSC, and a pair of import-type storage bins in the door panel would be very nice; otherwise there's little room for complaint.

Finally, hats off to Ford for being first among the domestic makers with anti-lock braking, which will be standard this year on the LSC, V-8-powered Designer Series models, and all V-8 Marks sold in the five westernmost states (California, Oregon, Washington, Alaska, and Hawaii). The system has its own electronic digital computer that stays in constant communication with deceleration sensors at all four wheels. If one begins to slow more rapidly than the others, the computer instantly adjusts pressures in the three-circuit hydraulic system to compensate and prevent lockup. We weren't able to test this system sufficiently during our day at the Dearborn track, but we can say that anti-lock braking promises to be the most important safety items to come along in many years. 

### DATA

#### Lincoln Continental Mark VII LSC

##### POWERTRAIN

Vehicle configuration	.....Front engine, rear drive
Engine configuration	.....V-8, OHV
Displacement	.....4950 cc (302 cu in.)
Max. power (SAE net)	.....185 hp @ 4200 rpm
Max. torque (SAE net)	.....260 lb-ft @ 2800 rpm
Transmission	.....4-sp. auto.
Final drive	.....2.06:1

##### CHASSIS

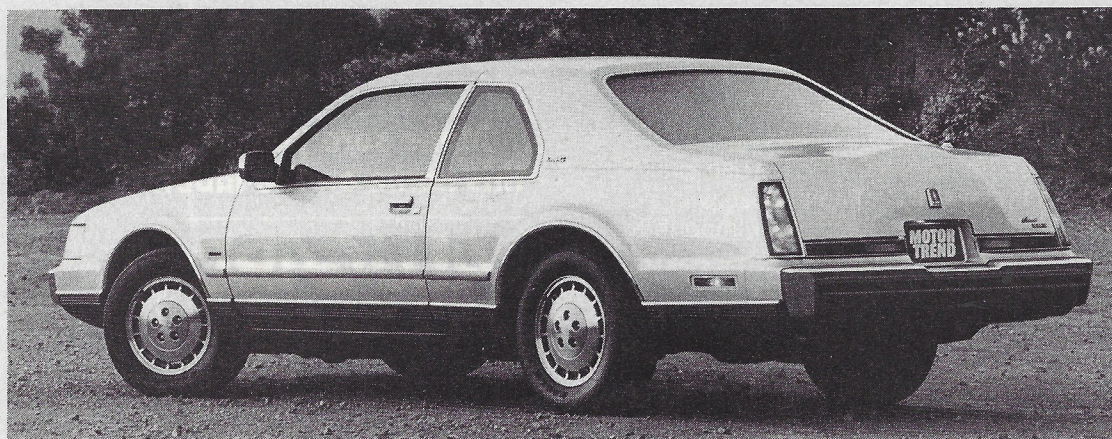
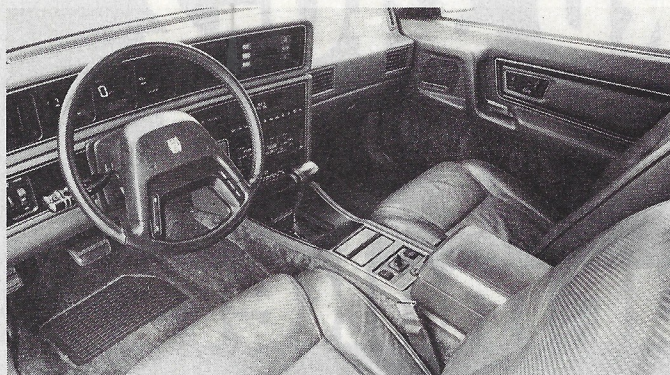
Suspension, f/r	.....Independent/live axle
Brakes, f/r	.....Disc/disc
Steering	.....Rack and pinion
Wheels	.....15 x 6.0-in. alloy
Tires	.....P215/65R15

##### DIMENSIONS

Wheelbase	.....2758 mm (108.6 in.)
Overall length	.....5151 mm (202.8 in.)
Curb weight	.....1585 kg (3501 lb)
Fuel capacity	.....83.2 L (22.0 gal)

##### PERFORMANCE

0-60 mph	.....9.43 sec
Standing quarter mile	.....17.30 sec/81.3 mph
Braking, 60-0	.....156 ft
Skidpad	.....0.78 g



Stylish lines, a tasteful interior, and a new 185-hp V-8 engine should help maintain the Mark VII LSC's popularity among luxury-touring devotees.