

The Mystery of the '79 Single Headlight Grille

For some time now, I have had many people that disagree with me as to whether some 1979 Li'l Red Express Trucks came with the 2 single 7" headlight setup. (See pictures at the end of the article)

This discussion has even got heated at times, because 99+% of the '79 Li'l Reds came with the 4 Quad stacked headlight setup, option NE5. Most people, having not seen a Li'l Red this way, want to argue that none of them were built with the single options, because they never have seen one that way.

In the 30+ years I have been studying and documenting the Li'l Red Express, I have only found 9 trucks with the single light setup, out of the 5118 Li'l Reds built in 1979. The only conclusion I can come up with is, the dealer just missed checking the NE5 option box when they ordered the truck. There would be no other reason to make the trucks look cheaper than all the other '79's they had on the lot. I have even had people argue that maybe somebody just changed their quad lamps for singles. I cannot, for the life of me, figure out why someone would go to all the expense to change his grille to a cheaper option. Therefore, I believe it was an error in ordering by the dealer. Nevertheless, it did happen and there are a few of the '79 Li'l Reds out there with the single lights. Dodge did not keep track of options installed on any trucks; therefore, nobody knows how many were produced with this setup.

This headlight setup was an extra cost option on all 1979 Dodge trucks, Li'l Reds included. The only 1979 Dodge trucks that came standard with the quad light setup were the Adventurer S.E. Special Edition models. This fact is confirmed in the 1979 Dodge truck brochure, page 5, it states **"Optional dual vertically stacked quad rectangular headlamps (included with the Adventurer S.E. Package) add to distinguished appearance. Standard pickup headlights are single 7" round ones."**

What this is telling the customer is, if you wanted the quad lights, it would be an extra cost (\$49.30) option. They were not standard equipment on a '79 Dodge truck, only on the Adventurer S.E. Package.

Also, on the dealer order sheet, it clearly indicates that you must check the box marked NE5 to get this extra cost option. Now, Dodge recommended that dealers get this option, to distinguish the new '79 models from the single headlight '78 models and most dealers ordered the top line Adventurer trucks with the quad lights. The only trucks usually ordered with the single light setup were the cheaper Custom and work truck models. Most people ordering the cheaper trucks did not want to spend the extra money for the quad lights, therefore, there are quite a few of the 1979 Custom model trucks with single lights.

Below is the 1979 Dodge Truck Price sheet and pics of the 3 known single light verified 1979 Li'l Red Express Trucks, with their VIN numbers.


2 of the trucks have sequential VIN numbers and were built on the same day and hour. Both of those trucks were built for export to Canada. The earlier truck was sent to Virginia and its location is unknown, at this time. The rest are in the U.S., and one is even in Norway.

I hope this will clear up any confusion anybody has on this subject in the future.

John C. Roberts (Lil Red Dad)
Co-Founder, President & Senior Judge, NALRETO



| 1979 DODGE TRUCK M.S.R.P. | | |
|--|----------------------------|------------|
| 1979 "L'L RED TRUCK" PRICES | | |
| | Wholesale With Holdback | M.S.R.P. |
| Base D150 115" W.B. Utiline (GH3) | \$4,190.83 | \$5,168.00 |
| Automatic Transmission (FAO) | 289.80 | 381.35 |
| Adventurer Package (YA1) | 184.00 | 242.15 |
| Delete Moldings (MEO) | - 35.30 | - 35.30 |
| Power Steering (ST1) | 153.50 | 202.00 |
| AM/FM/MX Stereo Radio (LM2) | 151.60 | 199.50 |
| Convenience Package (YK1) | 54.10 | 71.20 |
| Oil Pressure Gauge (LB2) | 9.45 | 12.45 |
| Head Lamps - Quad Rectangular (NE5) | 37.45 | 49.30 |
| L'l Red Truck Package (YH6) | 859.60 | 1,131.10 |
| • 360 4-Bbl. Engine (EH1) | | |
| • Chrome Five Slot Road Wheels - 5 | | |
| • Goodyear GT Tires - 5 | | |
| • Bright Rear Bumper | | |
| • Stabilizer Bar | | |
| • Special Steering Wheel | | |
| TOTAL | \$5,895.03 | \$7,421.75 |
| Price with air conditioning (HA1), | | |
| Heavy-duty front springs (SF1), | | |
| Tinted glass (GL2) with bench | \$5,368.63 | \$8,045.00 |
| Price with Bucket Seats (KTIKBS) | \$6,042.78 | \$7,616.20 |
| Price with Bucket Seats (KTIKBS), | \$6,516.38 | \$8,239.45 |
| Air conditioning (HA1), heavy duty | | |
| Front springs (SF1), tinted glass (GL2) | | |
| NOTE: Options or upgrading other than that described above is not allowed. | | |
| Truck, R. V. & Equipment Planning October 31, 1978 | | |



The bright-finish pickup grille is distinct, with two cross-hatched sections divided in the middle by a wide horizontal crossbar.

Front spring capacities from 1,340 lbs. to 2,250 lbs.; assurance of the right capacity for top performance.

Optional dual vertically stacked quad rectangular headlamps (included with Adventurer S.E. Package) add to distinguished appearance. Standard pickup headlights are single 7" round ones.

VIN D13JS9S153525



VIN D13JS9S197148



VIN D13JS9S197149

