

A PICKUP JUST LIKE DAD'S

Sam Bledsoe's **1979 Dodge Palomino** 4X4 is the rolling realization of his childhood dream!

By Loren Hoekema • Photos by Eric Arnold



SAM BLEDSOE'S FATHER was a Dodge man. Bledsoe recalls his family owning Chrysler products when he was growing up, among them an early 1950s Dodge B Series pickup that was totaled in a collision with a drunk driver. The Mopar that made the biggest impression on young Sam, however, was a 1979 D-150 pickup with the Palomino package.

The family's new truck came from Jim Manning Dodge in Dinuba, California. It was a two-wheel-drive, short-box Palomino demonstrator with a 360ci V-8, four-barrel carb, and an automatic transmission. The truck had been "dolled up" a bit for its demonstrator role with chrome wheels and an aftermarket trailer hitch. Young Sam fell in love with the

truck, especially since his dad told him the truck would be his when he got his driver's license.

Things don't always work out as we plan, of course, and life takes its own direction. Sam's father passed away in 1984 when Sam was just 11 years old. With a young son to raise and only one income, Bledsoe's mom could not keep

