



CHECKER SUPERBA AMBULANCE

NUMBER 3 FIRST QUARTER 2002

THE REMARKABLE PROFESSIONAL CHECKER

THE PROFESSIONAL CAR

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Number 103

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ON OUR COVER -To most of us the name Checker means only one thing – big, boxy yellow taxi cabs! But at one time, Checker Motors Corporation of Kalamazoo, Michigan did dabble in the professional car market. Yes, Virginia, there *were* such things as Checker Marathon hearses and ambulances -- not many, but at least a few. Palatine, Illinois PCS member Patrick Martin is also a member of the Checker Car Club of America. When Patrick asked awhile back if we would consider running an article on Checker professional cars, we jumped at his offer. We think you will find his story as interesting and revealing as we did. Patrick also supplied all of the photos to illustrate his story. The car on our front cover is a Swedish ambulance conversion of a Checker station wagon. *Lars Wennerquist/Terry Vaught Collection.*

INSIDE BACK COVER - While Checker Motors never did enter the mainstream hearse and ambulance business, the company did actually place into limited production a high-headroom ambulance conversion of the familiar Checker Marathon passenger car/taxi cab. Called the Checker Medicar, this was an extended-headroom version of the 129" wheelbase Checker Custom Limousine designed to comfortably accommodate three wheelchair passengers. When pressed into service as an ambulance, the Medicar could carry an ambulance cot and one wheelchair. David R. Markin, Checker's Vice President of Sales, noted that the Medicar Ambulance/Limousine was priced at less than half the price of a conventional ambulance. Pretty it wasn't, but from a practical standpoint the Checker Medicar had a lot to offer hospitals, retirement homes and patient transfer services.

BACK COVER - We should have run this photo in color! The long-wheelbase Checker Medhearse Landau Funeral Coach shown in this *computer-generated* photo was finished in a stunning fire engine red! The mourners may have preferred the traditional black, but this car sure would have stood out at the funeral service trade shows. *Robert Sinkus Creations.*