



Left out in the cold

Staff photo by Brian Tate

With the end of the semester drawing near, students are beginning to lose their minds as well as their refrigerators. Jed Adams (left) and other workers from University Re-

frigerators pick up some of the 475 units they leased this semester.

GM's subcompact cars debut as auto industry breaks slump

United Press International
DETROIT — General Motors' new subcompact J cars, designed as a direct challenge to Japanese sports, may catch the auto industry on an upswing when they hit showrooms May 21.

The J cars — which also will be marketed as the Pontiac J2000 and the Cadillac Cimarron — are GM's most direct challenge to the Japanese although they are the corporation's second wave of fuel-efficient, front-wheel drive small cars.

standard trim levels, good fuel economy and close attention to panel fits and finishes. The Cimarron — Cadillac's first subcompact — is positioned against expensive European luxury small cars.

Ward's Automotive Reports, the industry's statistical journal, said automakers are sticking with plans to build 2,052,000 cars in the April-June quarter despite a post-rebate sag that sent sales plunging to recession levels in April. Production in the second quarter last year was approximately 1,632,000.

GM previewed the Chevrolet Cavalier version of the J car — its most significant car introduction in two years — Monday, just as production in the auto industry was showing new vigor.

The first — Chevrolet Citation, Pontiac Phoenix, Oldsmobile Omega and Buick Skylark — hit the market just when the Iranian revolution stirred a gasoline panic in the United States and transformed the large, gas-guzzling American car into an outmoded dinosaur.

The J car price — a crucial factor in their success — has not yet been decided.

Industry reports showed April assemblies of 649,727 cars in the U.S., up 12.8 percent from 575,814 in the same month last year. Chrysler Corp. production for the month soared 67.3 percent to 83,540, Ford Motor Co. was up 13.5 percent to 142,077 and General Motors Corp. improved 8.6 percent to 394,574.

Industry-wide optimism over the spring market became apparent with word this week that automakers broke out of their two-year production slump in April and planned to continue that momentum through the second quarter — despite April's weak sales.

Chevrolet Cavalier and Pontiac J2000 will have what GM decided was the main attraction of Japanese subcompacts — high

American Motors Corp said it built 11,957 cars in the U.S. last month, down 25.2 percent from the same month last year and Volkswagen of America output of 17,579 cars was off 17.1 percent.

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