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DRAG CHALLENGE WEEKEND HITS SYDNEY!
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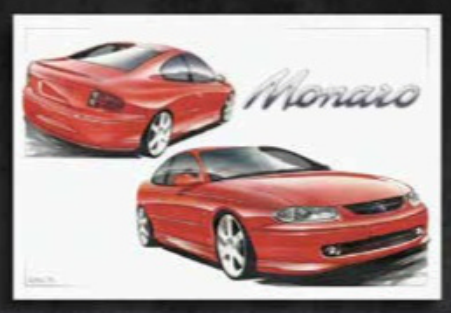

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TELFO

SIMON TELFORD

IT TAKES a special kind of bloke to lend you his tough streeter for 24 hours unsupervised, but *SM* shooter Shawn McCann is one of a kind!

His ride is Mabel – a 1963 Chevrolet C10. Thanks to a tonne of chassis work and a set of airbags, Mabel lays frame with the best of them, but the old girl is hiding a surprise under the bonnet. Pop the lid and you'll find a 400-cube Chev – assisted by an old-school single-turbo set-up! The turbo is located over the right-hand-side rocker cover, spooled up by just one side of the exhaust and with a four-barrel carby doing its job suck-through style. It's super-simple, but not ideal in 2020 terms of driveability!

The C10's mission was to help add some chrome-bumper flavour to the Australian Motoring Awards, but getting there would involve navigating Melbourne traffic in 40-degree temps. "She runs really well, but can be a bit temperamental," said Shawn. "Once she gets hot, she doesn't like to start again if you turn her off." Gulp!

Shawn gave me a tutorial on the airbags, then let me loose without the slightest look of concern. I idled out of the work carpark with extreme care, sweating bullets in the heat. I treated the throttle with the utmost respect, and you know what? Mabel ran like a dream and didn't even look like getting warm. The only drama was other drivers pulling alongside to gawk or take photos.

We rocked up at Melbourne Showgrounds and Mabel immediately pulled focus from the Porsches, Teslas and other modern exotics on show. Take that! I stuck to mineral waters for the duration and was stoked when the C10 fired straight up at the end of the night, even with a fair-size crowd watching.

I handed the Chev back the next day with a real appreciation for what a well-sorted car Shawn has built for himself. It is one thing to build a highly modified car that you can drive yourself, knowing its idiosyncrasies like the back of your hand. Throwing the keys to a novice is another thing!

It is ace working with a crew who are dyed-in-the-wool car enthusiasts, with grease under the fingernails and in most of their other orifices too. You could be excused for thinking our Kian might want to spend his weekends chilling out, given that he spends most of his weekdays up to his elbows in *Carnage* projects. But nope, he's recently added a very clean S13 Nissan Silvia to his stable. He bought the S13 as an unfinished project, with the promise that the CA18DET was full of forged internals. That will make three road-registered projects for the young fella – one four, one six and one V8!

AT THE SHOWGROUNDS THE C10 IMMEDIATELY PULLED FOCUS FROM THE PORSCHES, TESLAS AND OTHER MODERN EXOTICS ON SHOW. TAKE THAT!

Our Albury-based photographer Luke Hunter is in the process of dropping a 1UZ V8 and six-speed into a Series II RX-7, and Sydney-based scribbler Iain Kelly is deep into a complete – and unplanned – reimagining of his giant 1964 Pontiac Bonneville Sports Coupe.

We've got a couple of serious burnout fiends in the mix too, including Steve Titcumb (DRAGON) and videographer Peter Flint (OLDHOON). And that's without mentioning our more high-profile staffers, including Arby, Victor Bray and Dr Tim, who always have plenty of projects on the go.

Me? I've finally got my HZ Tonner on the road – still with 202 power, sadly. While the Tonner is handy, I've got a hankering for a wagon, or even a van. If anyone is in the market for a well-used trayback, drop me a line.

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COVER SHOT
Chris Thorogood
COMMERCIAL CONTENT DIRECTOR
Matthew Rice
(02) 9263 9706, mrice@bauer-media.com.au
NSW SALES MANAGER
Joseph Lenthall
(02) 8114 9421, jlenthall@bauer-media.com.au
VICTORIAN SALES MANAGER
Kim Simonsen
(03) 9567 4311
QUEENSLAND SALES MANAGER
Todd Anderson
0409 630 733
SOUTH AUSTRALIAN SALES MANAGER
Nick Lenthall
0439 485 835, nick.lenthall@bauertrader.com.au
AGENCY SALES MANAGER - NSW
Max Kolomiiets
(02) 8275 6486, max.kolomiiets@bauertrader.com.au
AGENCY SALES MANAGER - VIC/SA
Adrian Smith
0408 337 004, adrian.smith@bauertrader.com.au

ADVERTISING PRODUCTION
Karyssa Arendt
karyssa.arendt@bauertrader.com.au
PRODUCTION SERVICES
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CIRCULATION MANAGER
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NEWS FRONT

MARCH 2020: ALL THE NEWS THAT MATTERS

STORY SIMON TELFORD

STREET MACHINE DRAG CHALLENGE WEEKEND HITS SYDNEY!

AFTER two successful events in South East Queensland, we're moving the three-day Drag Challenge Weekend event to Sydney Dragway for 2020, 3-5 April.

And, while we'll be racing all three days at Sydney, that doesn't mean the entrants will be getting out of some big drives! There will be a minimum of 600km to cover, and you can expect some of those roads to be quite tough. That's why we call it Drag Challenge.

If you have never entered the event before, read the rules carefully before you commit. You can read them all at dragchallenge.com.au, but the very crux of the event is that once racing starts for the weekend, competitors cannot use car trailers or access support vehicles without disqualification. Other biggies are to observe all road rules and the zero blood alcohol limit during competition.

The whole deal costs $400 for three days' racing, which includes a T-shirt. Extra drivers are $150 each. If you enter and then can't make it on the day, be warned there are no rollovers or refunds for this event.

Each day's racing is open to spectators. Adults are $20 per day; kids 13 and under are free. You can purchase a three-day pass on the first day for $70 and score a bonus Drag Challenge Weekend 2020 T-shirt. Please note, there is no spectator parking in the pits with the competition vehicles.

SCHEDULE

THURSDAY, 2 APRIL

REGISTRATION for the event will be from 5pm to 9pm on Thursday, 2 April at Sydney Dragway. This is mandatory for all racers to get everyone

scrutineered, stickered up and ready to race. Entrants are permitted to stay with their cars at the track overnight.

FRIDAY, 3 APRIL

RACING starts at 9am and the lanes will stay open for six hours. Once each entrant is happy with their timecard, they must hand it in to race control, who will give them a route map to follow. The route (minimum 300km) is mandatory, with two checkpoints along the way. Entrants can choose to stay out on the road, at home if they live close by, or bring their car straight back to the track.

SATURDAY, 4 APRIL

AGAIN, racing will run from 9am to 3pm, followed by another 300km+ road route. Remember, Drag Challenge is for street cars, so be prepared for a challenging road route that could well include some big hills and nasty traffic.

SUNDAY, 5 APRIL

RACING starts at 10am and runs through until 4pm, after which we will crown the winners! There will be a chrome-bumper car show on this day – any spectator with a chrome-bumper ride will be given access to the best seats in the house.

> HOT GOSSIP

EUROTRIP!

HOW does a free VIP trip to the Le Mans 24 Hours sound? Shannons Insurance is giving away the ultimate two-week holiday, with a trip for two people to the 24 Hours with pit lane and paddock access, tours of Porsche and Mercedes-Benz museums and a hot lap of the Nurburgring. Oh, and when you get back, there'll be a brand new $25K Indian FTR 1200 S motorbike for you to take home. All you need to do to enter is hit up Shannons for an insurance quote before 9 April, so get dialling!

MECHANICS' MONTH

VALVOLINE have dubbed March 'Mechanics' Month', offering up some cool prizes for the most worthy of spanner-turners. Just let them know how you use Valvoline products in your workshop in 25 words or less, and you're in the running! The major prize includes a trip to Melbourne to join GRM Team Valvoline at Winton Raceway. There's also heaps of Valvoline merch on offer, and every entrant will receive a sticker pack. Head to valvolinepromotions.com between 1 March and 31 March to enter!

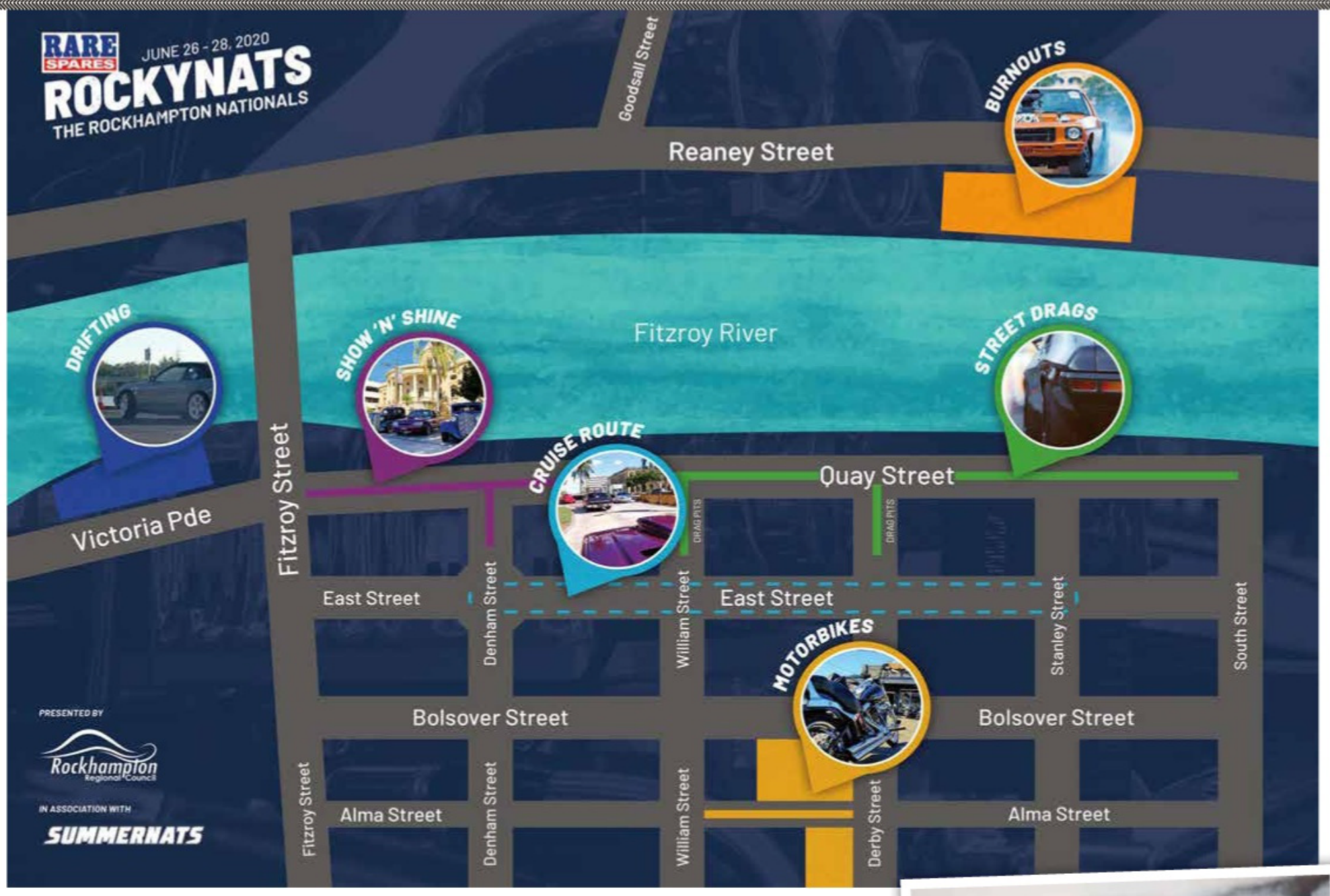
NEXT!

THE fresh metal keeps on coming in the April issue of *Street Machine*! Another bumper crop of feature cars will include some stars of the Summernats 33 Elite Hall, and there will be something to float your boat no matter if you're a Ford, Holden or Mopar fan. Or a blown, turbo or aspo fan. Or if you're partial to pro tourers, pro streeters, everyday street cars or all-out showstoppers. We'll also do a wrap-up of the summer show scene, and bring you coverage from Lights Out in Georgia – the pinnacle event for radial racers the world over. There will be plenty of tech, including a detailed look at air suspension systems. The April issue of *Street Machine* is on sale 26 March. It'll be a cracker!

NEWS FRONT

MARCH 2020: ALL THE NEWS THAT MATTERS

STORY JACK HOULIHAN



LET'S ROCK!

> THE INAUGURAL RARE SPARES ROCKYNATS IS READY TO, ERM, ROCK!

THE first-ever Rare Spares Rockynats is set to light up Central Queensland for a long June weekend of horsepower-fuelled action. A joint effort by the Summernats team and Rockhampton Regional Council, Rockynats will offer a plethora of automotive delights, 26-28 June.

Like its big-brother event in Canberra, the *Street Machine* Summernats, Rockynats' drawcards will include burnouts, cruising and show cars. Drifting and eighth-mile street drags are also set to feature all weekend, making for some intense no-prep racing along Quay Street in the Rockhampton CBD. Drags will be divided into two categories: those with quicker cars who want to race competitively, and less formal grudge racing that will be open to anybody willing to give it a shot in a controlled environment.

The event will be split over three precincts, centred around the Fitzroy River. The CBD will play host to the cruising and drags, while custom bikes will be displayed at City Hall. Rubber will be burnt across the river, with both a Burnout Masters qualifier and Burnout Championship competition taking place.

Several CBD roads will be blocked off, offering entrants the chance to bring along their unregistered cars for a punt on the tarmac, and the cruising will culminate with a show 'n' shine on Quay Street. Word on the street is that there will also be an elite-level show 'n' shine, with some impressive cars to be unveiled on the Friday night.

Recently treated to a six-million-dollar facelift, the Rockhampton City Raceway will also be running on Friday and Saturday nights to showcase speedway action from a variety of classes.

There's plenty to do outside the event, too. Set against the stunning Mount Archer, 635km north of Brisbane, Rockhampton is Central Queensland's regional centre. It's packed full of museums, historical sites and great dining.

Given the runaway success of the Red CentreNATS in Alice Springs and Summernats' enduring appeal, Rockynats is shaping up to be an unmissable show. Tickets are being snapped up fast, with the earlybird allocation already exhausted, so head to rockynats.com.au quick-smart for more information and tickets.

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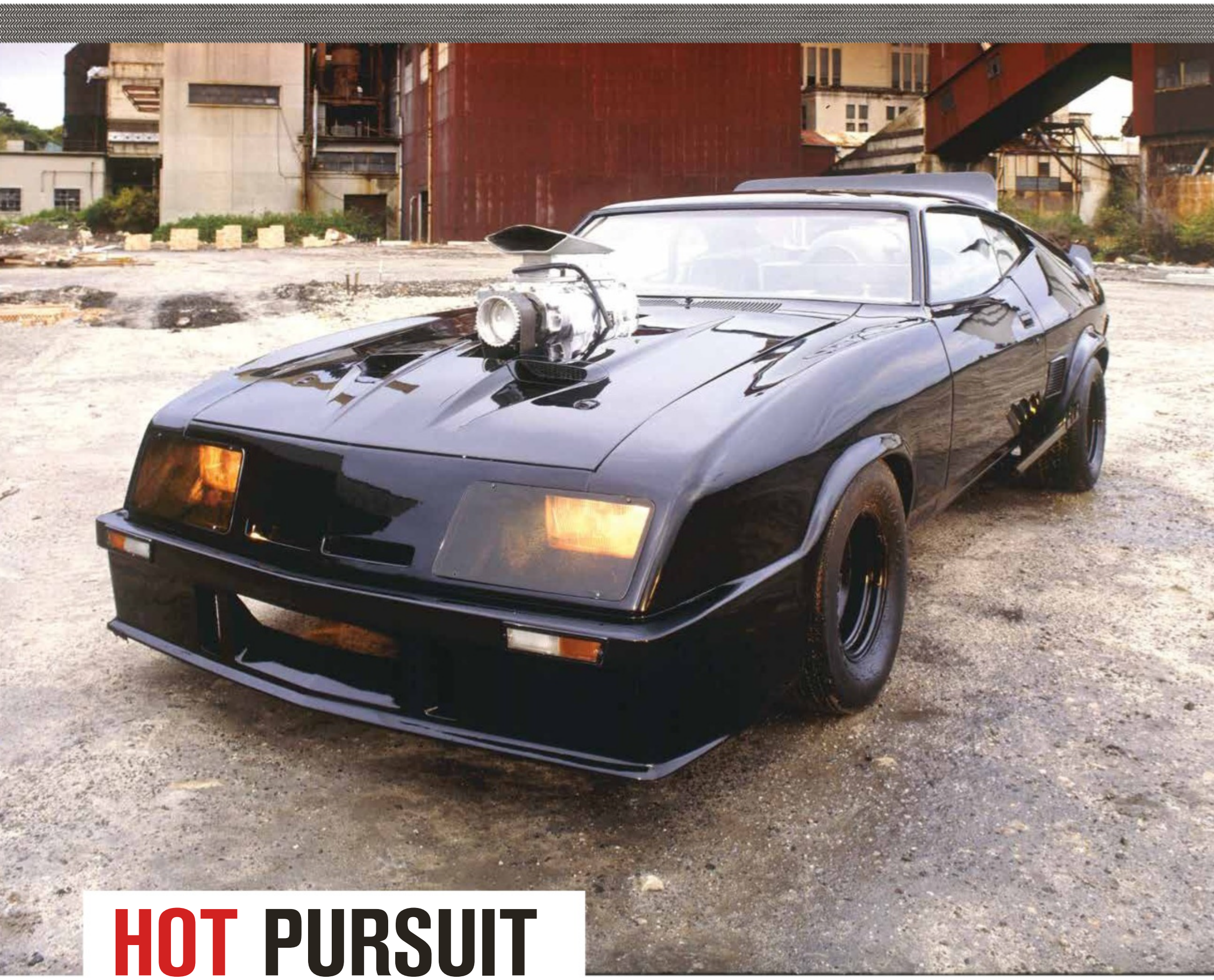
STORY DAVE CAREY WITH GLENN GRANT **PHOTOS** PETER BATEMAN



HOT PURSUIT

> THE ORIGINAL *MAD MAX* INTERCEPTOR IS UP FOR SALE!

THE original *Mad Max* Pursuit Special 'Interceptor' has been put up for sale by current owners, the Orlando Auto Museum in Florida, USA. This is huge news for *Mad Max* fans and Falcon GT enthusiasts alike, with Max Rockatansky's menacing black XB coupe arguably the most famous Aussie car of all time.

The coupe's transformation from second-hand car to film star started in 1977, when the genuine JG66 XB Falcon GT was sent to Ray Beckerley at Graf-X International with a brief from *Mad Max* art director Jon Dowding. Ray subcontracted some of the work, with Ford designer Peter Arcadipane fitting one of his Concorde noses and Errol Platt of Purvis Eureka fame installing the roof and tail spoilers after ripping them off Bob Jane's Monaro. Truck painter Rod Smythe and his brother made the flares, while Ray himself handled the paint.

With filming duties over, the car was then given to mechanic Murray Smith for unpaid work. With the original 1979 *Mad Max* movie a standout success, he sold the car back to the Kennedy-Miller team for use in *Mad Max 2*. For that film, the Concorde front was binned, while the rear bulkhead was chopped out and a pair of huge fuel tanks installed.

There was speculation that the XB had been destroyed during the making of the second film, but it actually ended up at a prominent Adelaide wrecking yard.

In the mid-80s, super-fan Bob Fursenko learned of its whereabouts, bought it and gave it a full resto at Franklin Side Crash in South Australia (*SM*, Oct-Nov '85). The lost Concorde front was replaced, but the twin tanks fitted during *Mad Max 2* were retained, making the car an amalgam of the most awesome aspects showcased in each film. Bob then built a sideshow out of his iconic machine, touring shopping centres and agricultural shows.

Once its touring days were over, it spent some time at the National Motor Museum at Birdwood before going to the UK, and finally America.

The Orlando Auto Museum hasn't placed a price on it, but it doesn't appear to be going to auction so they must have a figure in mind. We reckon it's about time the Interceptor came home. Anyone keen to make it happen?

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28-29 FEB, BALLARAT, VIC
Ballarat Swap Meet, Ballarat Airport. Visit ballaratswapmeet.com.au.

28 FEB, KEILOR DOWNS, VIC
Melbourne Muscle Cars 2020 Classic Car Show, Keilor Central Shopping Centre, 80 Taylors Road. Visit the Melbourne Muscle Cars Facebook page for more info.

29 FEB, COLAC, VIC
Colac Show & Shine, Colac Memorial Square. Call Marlene on 0412 493 124 or email gamarketing@optusnet.com.au.

29 FEB, DANDENONG, VIC
Penrite Auto Fest 2020, 110-116 Greens Road. Search 'Penrite Auto Fest 2020' on Facebook for more info.

29 FEB, LARA, VIC
Avalon 5K Burnout & Wet T-Shirt Competition, Avalon Raceway, Old Melbourne Road. Visit the Avalon Burnout Events Facebook page for more info.

29 FEB, LOGAN, VIC
Logan Car Show, Logan Pub, 6742 Wimmera Highway. Call Keith on (03) 5496 2220 or 0412 463 289.

01 MAR, DANDENONG, VIC
Dandenong All Holden Show, Dandenong Showgrounds. Visit the Dandenong All Holden Car Show page on Facebook for more info.

01 MAR, KYABRAM, VIC
Legends of the Mountain Show 'n' Shine, Kyabram Showground. Visit the Legends of the Mountain Facebook page for more info.

01 MAR, BAYSWATER, VIC
Mountain District Rodders Picnic Day, 51 Elizabeth Street. Search 'Mountain District Rodders Picnic Day' on Facebook for more info.

01 MAR, BROADFORD, VIC
Unique Cars Rolling 30, Broadford Motorcycle Complex. Visit rolling30.com.au.

01 MAR, SILVERWATER, NSW
Meguiar's Cars and Caffeine, Unit 35, Slough Business Park, Holker Street. Search 'Cars and Caffeine' on Facebook for more info.

01 MAR, MORPETH, NSW
Morpeth Motorama, Closebourne House, 135 Morpeth Road. Call Brian on 0414 811 943 or email brian@coffey.net.au.

01 MAR, QUEANBEYAN, ACT
Shannons Wheels 2020, Queanbeyan Showgrounds. Call Joe on 0407 331 048, email secretary@stharc.prg.au or visit stharc.org.au.

07 MAR, COWES, VIC
Shannons Phillip Island Cavalcade Parade Fundraiser, Phillip Island Grand Prix Circuit. Email belinda_douglas@shannons.com.au.

08 MAR, CLUNES, VIC
Clunes Historic Vehicle Show, Clunes Showgrounds. Call Neil on 0435 252 647.

08 MAR, WANGARATTA, VIC
All GM Day Wangaratta, Apex Park. Call Lester on 0427 500 815 or email ckiskov@bigpond.com.

08 MAR, FERNY CREEK, VIC
Belgrave Rotary Car Show, Ferny Creek Reserve. Visit portal.clubrunner.ca/5429 or email president@belgraverotary.com.

08 MAR, PRESTONS, NSW
Kool Kruisers Charity Car & Bike Show, Liverpool Catholic Club. Call John on 0417 401 402.

08 MAR, ASCOT, WA
Shannons Classic Car Show 2020, Ascot Racecourse. Email classiccarshow@councilofmotoringclubs.asn.au or search 'Shannons Classic Car Show 2020' on Facebook for more info.

08 MAR, COFFS HARBOUR, NSW
Show 'n' Shave For a Cure, Coffs Harbour Leagues Club, 65 Stadium Drive. Email shownshineforbloodcancer@gmail.com or visit facebook.com/Shownshaveforacure.

08 MAR, BLAIR ATHOL, SA
South Australian Rod & Custom Club Swap Meet, Kilburn Oval. Call Scott on 0412 555 723 or email sarcc@outlook.com.au.

08 MAR, MACLEOD, VIC
Springthorpe Car Show, The Village Common, Ernest Jones Drive. Call Jaron on 0433 664 994 or email springthorpecarshow@gmail.com.

09 MAR, SUNBURY, VIC
Just4Causes Car & Bike Show for Beyond Blue, Village Green, 12 Stawell Street. Email tyler.holden@outlook.com or search Facebook.

09 MAR, SEYMOUR, VIC
Seymour Show 'n' Shine, Kings Park. Call John on 0410 576 201

13-15 MAR, WODONGA, VIC
28th Chryslers on the Murray, Gateway Lakes, Wodonga. Visit chryslersonthemurray.com.

13-15 MAR, MOAMA, NSW
Rich River Rod Run, Perricoot Road. Call Frank on 0419 139 933, email fbowles@aussiebb.com.au or visit richriverrodclub.org.au.

14 MAR, GEELONG, VIC
Geelong All Holden Day, Geelong Baptist College, 590 Anakie Road. Search 'Geelong 16th All Holden Day 2020' on Facebook

14 MAR, LARDNER, VIC
Lardner Park Motorfest is back, including burnouts under lights! Check out motorfest.com.au for more info.

14 MAR, KILSYTH, VIC
Show 'n' Shine Car Show & Market Day, Gladesville Primary School, 48 Gladesville Drive. Search Facebook for more info.

15 MAR, GEELONG, VIC
Geelong Motor Show, Geelong Showgrounds. Call Sean on 0459 335 896.

15 MAR, CAVERSHAM, WA
Charger Club of WA Supercruise, Belmont Sports & Recreation Centre. Call 0459 325 340 or visit chargerclubofwa.asn.au.

15 MAR, NATTE YALLOCK, VIC
Motor De Pyrenees, Natte Yallock Recreation Reserve. Call Neil on 0409 541 610 or email phvcinc2013@gmail.com.

15 MAR, WERRIBEE, VIC
Werribee & District Collectable Vehicle Club Show 'n' Shine, Civic Centre car park, 45 Princes Highway. Visit facebook.com/WDCVC for more info.

21 MAR, WARRNAMBOOL, VIC
All Holden Day, Pertobe Road, Lake Pertobe. Call Peter on 0400 638 928 or email peter-dunn8@bigpond.com.

21 MAR, LAGGAN, NSW
Laggan Pub Car Show, Peelwood Road. Call (02) 4837 3208 or Leigh on 0438 224 711.

21 MAR, BOREE CREEK, NSW
Big Boy Toys Day, Boree Creek Hotel. Call (02) 6927 1407.

22 MAR, SCORESBY, VIC
All Commodore Day, Caribbean Gardens & Market. Visit allcommodoreday.com.

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STORY CARLY DALE **PHOTOS** TIM McCORMACK

SHANNONS
SHARE THE PASSION

LETEISHA CHUN TIE

> TOWNSVILLE, QLD

WE SPIED Leteisha Chun Tie as she was swapping her PARTY TIME VK Commodore's alternator in the searing heat of the Skid Row line-up at *Street Machine* Summernats 33. The Far North Queenslander had scored a Burnout Masters invite to the event thanks to her efforts at Red CentreNATS, so we caught up with her to find out how it all went.

How was your Summernats 33 experience, Leteisha?

It was awesome! Last year I went with my brother Jay's Tiny Towing Suzuki burnout car, but this was my first time as an entrant. Everyone warned me about the big camber on the sticky burnout pad, so while I was anticipating that, it was new to me and I feel I did a poor first skid. By Saturday the car had issues, including no power steering or power brakes. I had nerves galore, but went out, changed my driving style and popped the rears almost simultaneously – my mates started calling me 'Bang Bang'! During the Sunday Championship round I lost power mid-skid thanks to an electrical fault. I couldn't restart it and I had to be towed off. I was disappointed that I didn't get to pop the tyres, but in the end that's motorsport.

Tell us about PARTY TIME.

It's a VH-bumpered VK Commodore that we bought as a shell about six years ago. 2019 was the first year I competed in it. It runs an LS1 with custom camshaft and head work, twin throttlebodies and velocity stacks. It's nothing too flash, putting out 345kW *[462hp]* at the wheels. Behind is a TH400 and standard LSD Commodore diff with 3.45:1 gears and a four-link rear. Now we need bigger tubs to tuck the tyres under further so as not to damage the new custom three-layer pink pearl paint. Mary and Nathan at Knight's Bodyworks in Cairns gave it a full respray in a two-week timeframe ready for Tropical Meltdown last year. I wanted a different colour to others in the FNQ scene, and they nailed it!

How'd you fare at Tropical Meltdown?

It was really exciting; I won the V8 class and Best Lady Skid. Then at Red CentreNATS I came second in the Burnout Championship and won the Summernats Masters invite. It's been a crazy year, but we are lucky that we can factor in the time off, as my partner Liborio and I own and run LG Automotive & Dyno in Townsville and Cairns.

Why the PARTY TIME plates?

It was nicknamed 'The Pig' at first, as it had no power steering. Then once we spent time and money on it, Liborio came up with PARTY TIME, as it's a good time when friends and family help us out with the car. Plus, when I'm about to do a skid I can say: "It's PARTY TIME!"

What's next?

We've talked of upgrading to an LS3, and everyone tells us to also go blown. I plan to compete again at the Northern Nats and Tropical Meltdown, and I'll keep taking female passengers to encourage women into the sport. I'm also continuously improving my driving skills; I still have a lot of learning to do.

I popped the rears almost simultaneously. My mates started calling me 'Bang Bang'!

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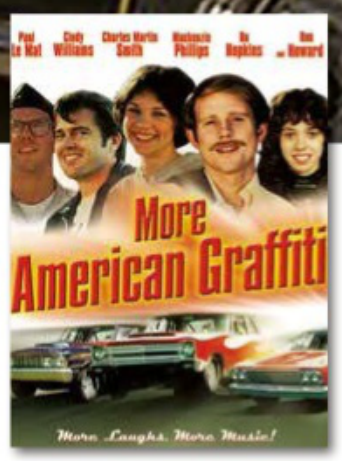
FANGING FLICK

STORY SIMON MAJOR

COOL FLICK FACT: This would be Ron Howard's last credited role in a theatrically released movie.



BREAKDOWN

VEHICLES: 1932 Ford hot rod, 1957 Chevrolet 210, 1956 Chevrolet Corvette C1, 1956 Chrysler Windsor, Don Long Top Fuel Dragster, 1964 Ford M151, 1960 Pontiac Ventura, 1963 Plymouth Belvedere

STARS: Paul Le Mat, Ron Howard, Charles Martin Smith, Candy Clark, Cindy Williams, Mackenzie Phillips, Anna Bjorn, Harrison Ford, Bo Hopkins, Will Seltzer, John Lansing, Ken Place

DIRECTOR: Bill L Norton

ACTION: Nostalgic race action takes centre stage, shot at the iconic Fremont Drag Strip

PLOT: The sequel to *American Graffiti* revisits the lives of some of the main characters over four consecutive New Year's Eves

AVAILABLE: YouTube, DVD

MORE AMERICAN GRAFFITI 1979

> MORE LAUGHS, MORE MUSIC, AND MOST IMPORTANTLY, MORE CAR ACTION

MAKING a sequel flick is always a tough gig, but not many have had to live up to such a legendary forerunner as *American Graffiti*. Hailed as an instant classic shortly after its release in 1973, the George Lucas-helmed original continues to be lauded – especially by us car nuts – nearly five decades later. So it was quite a bold move for Lucasfilm to take a punt with a sequel, *More American Graffiti*, in 1979.

This time around, Lucas chose to pass the writer/director hat to Bill L Norton, who wrote the script for *Convoy* and has since amassed some pretty decent TV director credits, such as *The Twilight Zone*, *Tour of Duty*, *Medium* and *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*.

More American Graffiti explores the closing stills of the original movie by elaborating on the immediate futures of most of the primary cast, cleverly intertwining each storyline via few-minute bursts, each taking place on a different New Year's Eve between 1964 and 1967.

We have John Milner (Le Mat) vying for Top Eliminator honours against the factory team at the Fremont Drag Strip; Terry 'The Toad' Fields (Smith) desperate to escape the war in Vietnam; Debbie (Clark) living the hippy lifestyle and trying to find her way with a seedy boyfriend, Lance (Lansing); and newlyweds Steve and Laurie (Howard and Williams respectively) confronting the pressures of marriage and parenthood while being drawn into anti-war protests with Laurie's younger brother, Andy (Seltzer).

Richard Dreyfuss declined the opportunity to reprise his role as Curt Henderson (his character is merely mentioned in passing), while Harrison Ford (on the back of his *Star Wars* success) returned for a cameo as Falfa, now a police officer, having traded his 'field car' for a cop's Harley-Davidson.

As to be expected, the Milner story is where the gearhead interest is. After taking a spill, drag racer Milner teams up with rival Roger Beckwith (Place) to take on the factory-backed team. There's also a blossoming love interest for Milner in the form of non-English-speaking Icelander, Eva (Bjorn).

The race action doesn't disappoint; serious eye-candy is present both on the track and filling the background. The tyre-smoking FED action is on-point, but don't be a knob like me and let the devil in the details spoil things; I wish I'd never seen the black '57 sporting a set of Cragar Super Trick rims, which weren't released until the early 70s.

VERDICT: 3/5

MORE American Graffiti has a lot to live up to, but it actually holds up okay. I hated it when I first saw it back in the 1980s, as I was still riding the purist nostalgia wave of the original at the time. However, a recent re-watch with some alleged maturity under my belt has me appreciating the film far more. The four intertwined chapters nicely segue from the innocence of youth portrayed in *American Graffiti* to the seriousness of adulthood, while still leaving some of the humour of the original flick intact.

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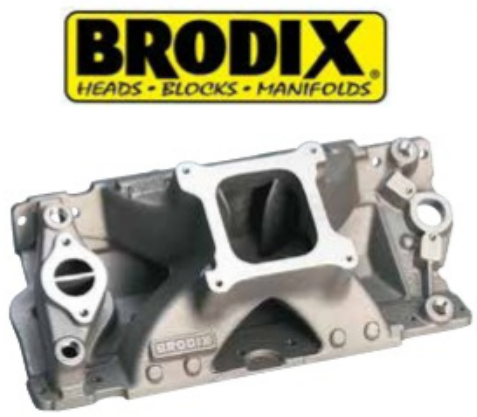

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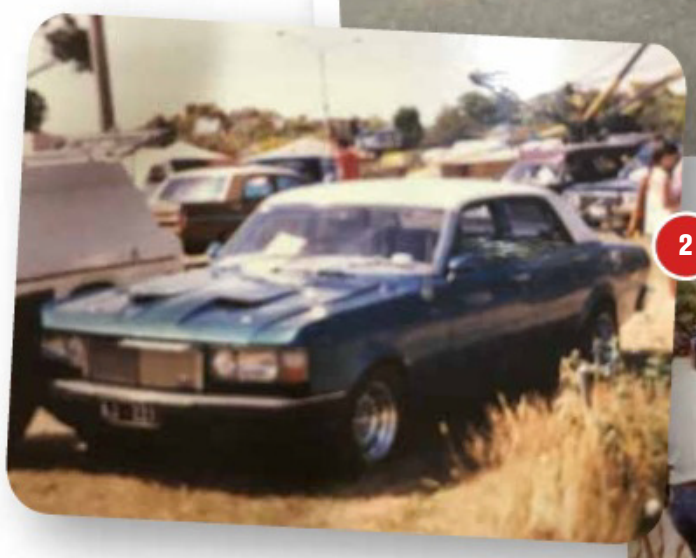
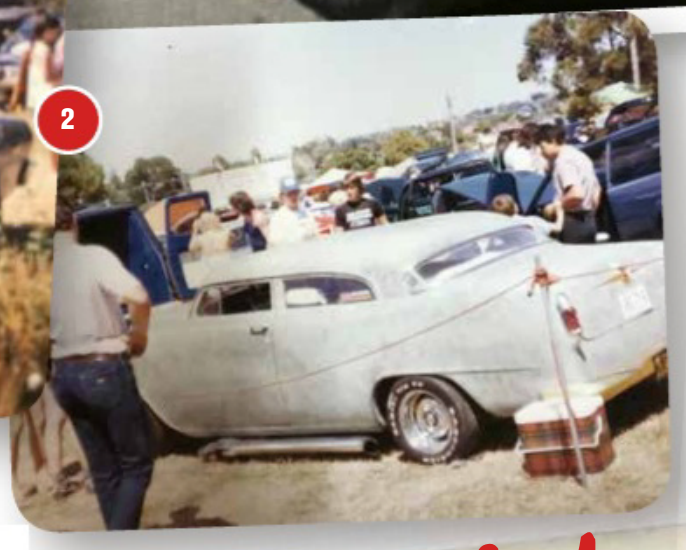
SNAP SHOTS

STORY SIMON MAJOR





JON WILLIAMS

> BORONIA, VICTORIA

Part 1

JON Williams has had an absolute blinder of a car career. From dabbling with all manner of build challenges in the back shed to being part of the design team at HSV, Jon has tried his hand at a variety of makes and models over the years, refining virtually every skill needed along the way. Here are some of his favourites, with more to come next month!

01: MICK Dascoli's 1940 Ford coupe has been on the scene for decades, and Jon worked with Mick as young blokes. "I've known Mick and his brother John for 40 years, which is pretty scary in itself," he says. "Mick was getting to the tail-end of this project when we met, and I've seen the '40 evolve from blown small-block Chev power to a 426 Hemi! He has been a pretty good influence, along with a lot of folks I know in the car game."

02: GROWING up in the Melbourne suburbs of Huntingdale and Belgrave in the 1970s and 80s was hot-car heaven for Jon. "Custom was king in the hot-car scene," he recalls. "This heavily chopped and two-doored FC blew me away, and how is the XR Falcon with the WB Statesman front! You'd be crucified for doing that nowadays, which is more the pity really. One car that I used to see regularly was a wildly customised green Holden ute. I later learned that it was John Zeigler's 'Techno' HJ that went on to feature in *Mad Max*."

03: THIS Mazda came about as the result of a bet. "Around 1989, a mate reckoned I couldn't build a drag car for under $4-5K, so the challenge was on," Jon says. "I worked part-time for another friend, Dietmar, at a Bayswater wreckers, so in true Aussie fashion we went into the yard and found the smallest car with the biggest engine bay to take a Cleveland. This Mazda 1300 was chosen, and with a few chalk lines on the floor, I was building a drag car. It ran a big-port 351 Clevo backed by a C10, with a TA Torana front end and a shortened One Tonner 4.44-geared Salisbury diff. The little thing started going well and most times ran in the 12.30 zone at around 115mph. It was an ugly little house brick, but a ton of fun."

04: AFTER retiring the Mazda, Jon had a brainwave for a new Capri-based project, and scored a 'mule' body from Ford. Motorcraft came on board with some sponsorship, and Ray Ward from Warlord pieced together a new 550hp Clevo running Super Flow-tweaked heads and a Crower solid-roller cam. There were a few teething issues with the ex-Mazda Salisbury diff and strut front end, but Jon and his team raced 35 meetings in his first season for a 10.04@139mph best. "Drag racing was always a family affair; it took us all over Australia and we met and raced with some great people," Jon says.

05: JON'S own version of 'Grandpa's axe' would be his Ford Pilot hot rod. Bought as a $1500 shell back in 2005, the Pilot has had

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numerous paintjobs, flame jobs and wheel combos over the years. The chassis features an LX Torana front end with HQ spindles and discs, while out back is a Watt's link set-up from an XE Falcon. It runs a 393 stroker Cleveland backed by a C10 with a 3000rpm stall, and is soon to score alloy heads, a solid-roller cam and 1050 Dominator carb in the hope of running a 10-second pass. Body mods are numerous; both the front doors and front guards have been lengthened, the body has been channelled four inches and the windscreen was laid back three inches. A '38 Anglia grille was fitted, along with a Plymouth dash and tail-lights.

06: JON owned this Rambler Rebel hardtop for 12 years, running a 343-cube AMC donk backed by an FMX transmission and 31-spline nine-inch. "I fully rebuilt everything twice," he says. "I tubbed it to fit the 15x10 wheels and fitted a full leather interior with new wiring and gauges in a custom dash panel. I was just getting a bit tired of having a black car, and met a guy a few years ago who wanted to buy it. We did a deal, and he loves the car so much; I'm just happy to see it go to a good home. I did have a 360 AMC engine, 6/71 blower and Powerglide trans planned to fit, but I sold that eventually too. I was a bit sad to see it go, but looking back just gives you a sore neck."

07: WHEN Jon was a kid there weren't too many resources available to learn how to build and make stuff. "You just did it and it either worked or you stuffed it up; you'd learn how to fix it and then move forward," he says. "I just read as many car magazines and books as possible, then ended up doing a mechanical apprenticeship. I can fabricate to a certain degree, but guys nowadays have such great talents and the bar is so much higher. I love how you can learn to do lots of stuff online or through courses, and my inspirations have come from everything and everyone around me. People that inspire me are guys like Gene Winfield (pictured) and Peter Arcadipane. I've had the honour of meeting them both and chatted with them about car design and how it's all done. What a thrill!"

08: JON built this cool XD panel van back in 2008 and went down the full old-school custom path with it. "I bought it as a daily driver and fitted a later-model six-cylinder engine and five-speed," he says. "I added the Fairlane front along with a full Fairlane dash and controls. I made up the flares and roof spoiler and then fitted the Cragar rims and a Phase V front spoiler." In true Jon fashion, he felt more mods were needed, so he re-pumped the rear flares to fit up 10-inch Cragars, added an FG bonnet bulge and made some side skirts that replaced the sidepipes it was then running. "It was a great van, and all of these mods were done in the old method of it still being my daily driver. There was nothing better than hitting the open road with my wife Karen and cranking up the AC/DC," Jon laughs.

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> LETTER OF THE MONTH

FORTY, NOT OUT

IT'S great that *Street Machine* is about to break 40. Here's a picture of my earliest issue. It's amazing what you were able to get away with back in the day – smoking ads and women wearing only what was on their minds! Anyway, let's hope that you can keep it going around for another 40 years; maybe we'll start to see a few EV cars grace the pages! Just imagine a future Burnout Master being an EV!

Speaking of the Masters, well done to you all for providing so much live content from Summernats 33 under the extreme weather conditions in our nation's capital. The opening scenes on Thursday couldn't have been more chilling yet thrilling at the same time. It felt like *Mad Max*; George Miller couldn't have scripted it any better.

But even under the trying conditions of bushfire smoke and temperatures in the high 30s and 40s, the entire staff of Summernats was able to still put on a show.

The Top 60 turnout just keeps getting better every year – how people can keep building cars to this quality year in and out is a testament to their ability to keep pushing the boundaries of automotive design.

As for the Haltech Horsepower Heroes comp, who would have guessed that the overall winner would be a turbo six-cylinder making more than 2200hp at the hubs? Congratulations to Maria Passos and Dyno-Mite Performance on their win – Barra the world, indeed!

That just shows that there are other options than an LS for fun (though there's nothing wrong with an LS); Scotty clearly agrees with Lightning McBarra!

To all the people who were able to attend, either as spectators or who showed us your cars, I say thank you. To the vendors there helping to promote the car culture, you have all done a great job in trying to keep the modified car industry alive.

There will be a time when EVs take over this wide brown land, but until that day comes, let's get out there and explore it in cars we love to build and drive, as well as sharing stories along the way.

James Baylis, email

WELL PADDED

A MASSIVE thanks to the burnout pad crew at *Street Machine* Summernats. We attend the 'Nats every year with our four kids, and we always marvel at the stamina of the team working on the pad, especially those in the full fire suits. To read that some of those were actually volunteer firefighters working on their days off (Telfo, *SM*, Feb '20) blew my mind!

We're so appreciative of their efforts to allow the show to go on. Thanks a million, Geoff Holder and your team.

James Mannix, Dubbo

RESERVE GRADE

I AM one of the people fortunate enough to own one of the five Holden Employee Reserve Edition VF SS-V Redline utes that you referred to in your Commodore tribute article (*SM*, Feb '20). The article mentioned that only one of these utes was ordered with a manual transmission. This is incorrect. All five vehicles were in fact manuals. While I would love to claim that my manual ute is a one-off, it wouldn't be true.

I believe it's important to ensure that the correct information is published (on all Holden models and variants) for historical accuracy and to avoid unnecessary debate and confusion by enthusiasts in the future. I'm sure the other four ute owners would feel the same way.

I drive my ute from time to time, as they are meant to be enjoyed. It only has around 1350km on the clock and I need to get it out on the road more. While I will never sell my ute (the kids can fight over it when I'm gone), I am curious as to how they will be viewed in years to come in terms of their collectability, particularly as it seems not many people know about them. Like Dave Carey said in one of his online comments, "time will tell".

Mike Smith, email

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FITTING TRIBUTE

MY NAME is Mal Black, owner of Leadsled Auto Art. I do custom, one-off drawings of cars. I'd like to take the opportunity to thank my buddy Nick Cooper for getting in contact with me to draw up his mate Shane Cannon's HQ Monaro.

Shane tragically passed away on 14 January this year, aged just 54 years. Nick contacted me and enquired whether I could possibly draw Shane's Monaro for his funeral. I had it drawn in two days, and Nick got all of Shane's friends and family to sign the drawing.

My condolences go out to all of Shane's family and friends. It was an honour to draw his beloved Monaro. RIP Shane Cannon.

You can view more of my drawings on Facebook at Leadsled Auto Art, and I also have a 40-page colouring book in the works.

Many thanks for your time.

Mal Black, email

> DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH

FALCON TAKES FLIGHT

MY 11-year-old son Gilby loves his cars and likes drawing them as well. Here is his drawing of an XP Falcon.

James Marshall, Perth, WA

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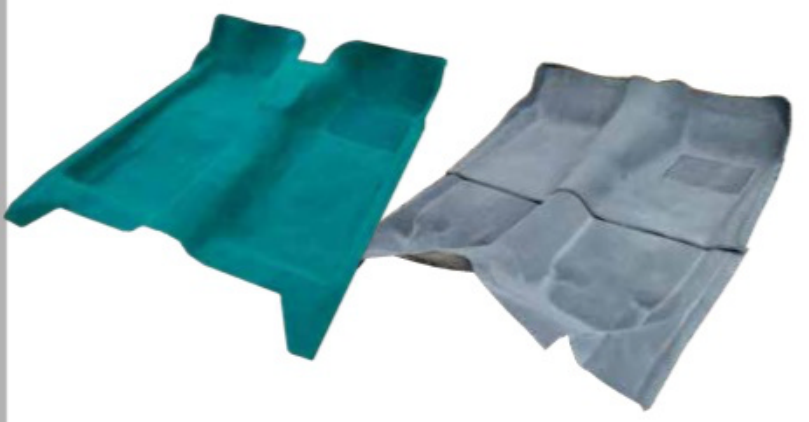

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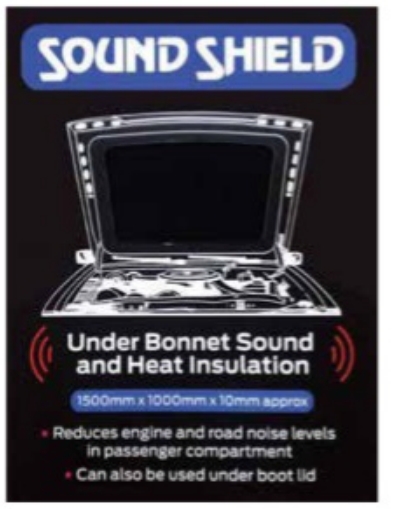

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PREDICTING trends in the classic car market is always tricky and sometimes depressing, with countless tales of the ones that got away. Who would've thought a rusty XD Falcon would end up being worth more than a crumpled Coke can? With 60s, 70s and now even 80s Australian metal well on the march to ludicrous prices for even base-model examples, it always begs the question of what will be next. A tidy Tickford-enhanced AU Falcon XR8 sedan was recently listed on TradeUniqueCars.com.au for $5500, so we decided to put the question to our Facebook followers: Could this – yes, an AU Falcon – be a future classic?

Darren Conroy – What do you mean, "future classic"? It is already.

Malcolm Smith – Well, the ugly duckling fried-egg-headlamp Porsches from the same era are making a comeback; no reason why this ugly duckling can't do the same. Both shared similar-styled ugly dashboards too.

Rufiz Onfire – Ugly 20 years ago, ugly today (and I'm a Ford guy).

Cameron Brewster – Rufiz Onfire, wash your mouth out! It's beAUtiful.

Tom Veness – AUs were classics right off the bat.

Peter Nielson – I remember when everyone said HD Holdens were pieces of shit. Now they're paying $20K for them.

Hunter Smithers – Honestly, I'd own one if the interior of them wasn't so rubbish compared to the VS and VT Commodores.

James Giarola – You'd be lucky to find any still running, let alone become a classic.

Peter Steele – James Giarola, you might want to open your eyes. Half a million trouble-free kilometres is not uncommon for AUs.

Chris Bennett – Still the ugliest Falcon shape ever produced.

John Penfold – They look just like a turd, tapered at both ends.

Brad Vincent – God f**ken help us now; we are lost.

Chris Benn – My gas-only AU has 450,000km on it and is only worth the registration fee; it's hardly a classic. Only fleet owners bought those cars. I don't know of any other privately bought AUs.

Kyle Spencer – They definitely will be. They're one of those cars no one wanted back in the day, then worth mega-bucks because there's none around.

Dave Tangey – I just spat my tea out.

Francine Brown – A sensibly priced modern classic for once.

Russell Bell – Had this atrocity not actually been produced, I would have thought it was a practical joke.

Craig Urand – It doesn't appeal to me, but at $5000 it will look cheap in a few years from now.

Mark Burch – You'll be kicking yourself in 10 years if you don't get one of these classics.

Bailey Trajanovski – It just has 'single dad' written all over it.

Brett Caffyn – Ugly, but the last of the best-engineered Falcons. I had a few as company cars over the years and the AU never broke down, whereas the BA was back in one week after driving it out and the FG did numerous diffs and an engine.

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IT MIGHT BE AN ELITE-LEVEL STUNNER, BUT THIS 580HP EH HOLDEN FROM MASKELL'S CUSTOMS & CLASSICS WAS BUILT TO DRIVE

STORY IAIN KELLY
PHOTOS CHRIS THOROGOOD

DESIGNATED DRIVER

HAVING the loose fruit in your pocket to buy your dad the car he's always wanted is something many street machiners would love to do, and Heath Madgwick actually got to do this for his father, Jack. However, the big reveal didn't quite follow the Hollywood script many might expect.

"My mother and I bought it for my dad as a birthday present surprise, as he'd always dreamed of owning an EH but could never afford one," Heath says. "We gave him the car on his birthday, and he was over the moon when he laid eyes on it. But he had a bit of a poke around it, took it for a drive and came back a few minutes later and told us he didn't think much of the car's driveability; he'd forgotten what a '64 Holden is like to drive! I took it down to Greg the next day and we had a chat about building it as a real driver."

The Greg that Heath mentions is none other than Greg Maskell of Maskell's Customs & Classics in Shepparton, the bloke responsible for a flood of killer hand-built cars and restorations.

"The EH was tidy, but Greg and I had ideas on how to make it better, make it fit in with the other cars we have in the family," Heath says. "Dad actually bought another small-block EH about eight months ago that is pretty impressive, and I have a couple of blown HG Premiers; one has a little 900hp, 434ci SBC, the other has a 427ci LSX stroker making over 1000hp. I also have an 800hp, 548ci big-block in my ute, UP1T."

With a shed full of heavy hitters like that, you can understand how an HR front end and 192ci red with triples wasn't going to cut it for Heath and Jack. However, as it turns out, Heath and Greg had more strongly held opinions than Jack on how the car should progress, leaving Jack to come up with the car's name: NOSAY.

"Dad wanted stuff like green vinyl upholstery, so he ended up having no say in the EH's build, so that's what we called it," Heath laughs. "He loves it now. It was never intended to be this kind of car; as it progressed, it grew into something much nicer than what we originally planned."

DAD TOLD US HE DIDN'T THINK MUCH OF THE CAR'S DRIVEABILITY; HE'D FORGOTTEN WHAT A '64 HOLDEN IS LIKE TO DRIVE!

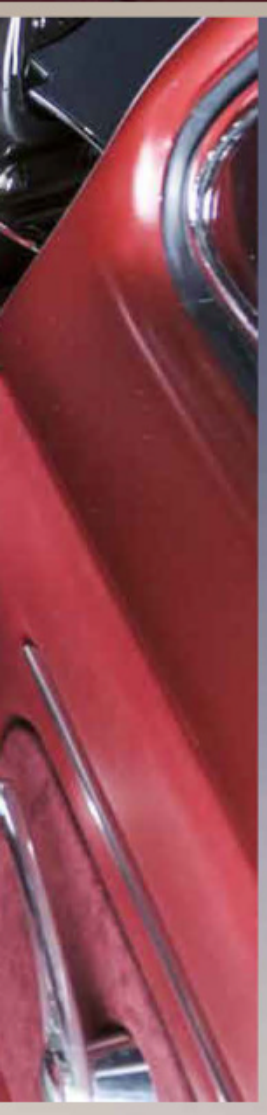
ENGINE BAY: Once all the alloy pieces – including the intake manifold, top panel of the radiator and bonnet hinges – were polished to a fine shine, a vapour-blasting process called Aquablast was then applied to highlight certain areas with a different-textured finish

ENGINE: “At the start I had an LS2 in it, which was a nice little thing, but I wasn’t really happy with the 400hp it was making,” says Heath. “I had this LS3 built by North Vic Engines making nearly 600hp, so I talked to Dad and we decided to throw that in. We decided to put the Shaun’s eight-throttle intake on it because the build had gone further than the average carby car, and not many people see those throttlebody set-ups around”

REAR END: “I wanted a triangulated four-link in the rear so we could put a back seat in it and make it look normal,” Heath says. “I wanted it set up so we could drive it to Brisbane if we wanted to, and that is another reason it has air con, so Dad can enjoy it on a 40-degree day”

INTERIOR: Mick Carter handled the epic job of trimming the EH just weeks out from its Summernats debut. Burgundy leather covers Scat front seats and a custom rear, while Classic Instruments gauges and a Boyd Coddington tiller round out the cockpit. Heath and Jack used their CNC machine at home to make most of the billet parts, including the pedals, gear lever, bonnet hinges and door knobs

TUBS: We were always going to go tubs; that’s what we do: we like to tub shit,” laughs Heath. “So the floors had to come out. When we acid-dipped it there were a few surprises like rust in the rear quarters, but otherwise it wasn’t too bad really”



While NOSAY presents as a clean, mild-looking EH sedan at first glance, the number and scale of the body modifications is truly mind-bending. It starts with a full chassis and a front subframe welded up under the car, providing a solid backbone for the 427ci LS3 V8 up front, with a flat floor and roomier trans tunnel all hand-fabricated by the Maskell's team.

It isn't hard to spot that the EH has fabricated wheel tubs to allow the fat 17x7in and 18x10in Boyd billets to sit perfectly in the wheelarches, but there are also far more subtle mods employed to sharpen up the sedan's lines. The bottom edge of each door has been squared off, while the front and rear bumpers were remade using front-bumper corners mated to handmade centre sections that feature a raised top lip.

Every panel on the car has been seam-welded, with the return folds deleted to leave them completely smooth. The bolthole apertures on the front guards were raised, and outer front guard skins were used as inner guard pieces on opposite sides of the engine bay. The exposed section of each B-pillar was narrowed, the front and rear stone trays were made as one-piece items, the fuel-filler cap was hidden behind a tail-light and the inside of the bootlid and bonnet were smoothed off. A one-piece radiator support was also fabricated, and a flat firewall added to tidy up the lines of the engine bay.

IT PRESENTS AS A CLEAN, MILD-LOOKING CAR AT FIRST GLANCE, BUT THE NUMBER AND SCALE OF THE BODY MODS IS MIND-BENDING

Sitting proudly up front is a tough LS3, punched out to 427ci by North Vic Engines thanks to forged Mahle slugs, along with an Eagle 4340 crank and H-beam rods. A Comp Cams custom-grind hydraulic-roller cam provides the chop, with Brodix heads and a sexy Shaun's Custom Alloy individual-throttlebody intake manifold topping the package. So far it has been good for 580hp on the engine

dyno on pump gas, though the Autronic ECU hasn't had its final tune yet.

Behind the big-inch LS is a McLeod twin-plate clutch connected to a six-speed Tremec T56 Magnum cog-swapper – something different from the usual automatics. "The old fella wanted to go manual, as he just likes them," says Heath. "It created a lot of dramas fitting the big Tremec in the little Holden body."

With sweet road manners a primary concern, a Castlemaine Rod Shop steering-rack front end was fitted, wearing Viking coil-overs and Wilwood disc brakes all 'round, while a triangulated four-link holds up the nine-inch diff out back.

However, fitting the hidden air conditioning system proved to throw a spanner in the finely crafted works, as Greg Maskell explains. "To fit an LS into an EH isn't too bad, but there's no room for an a/c pump on the front of the motor," he says. "My fabricator Dean worked out that we had to mount the engine 40mm lower and 40mm further back in the car, which then meant we had to change the sump, make a whole custom exhaust, change the firewall, gearbox mounting, trans tunnel, the gear shifter – as soon as you change one thing it alters so much more. I often say that if you want to modify the headlights, start at the tail-lights!"

"I talked a lot with Greg, and it was a collaborative process between us of finding solutions to ideas we'd had," says Heath. "He pulled some big days leading up to Summernats, and I take my hat off to him to get the car there."

"Pretty much from the end of October I didn't get a day off, including Christmas Day," sighs Greg. "We would knock off at 1-2am, then be back at it at 5-6am each day."

The hard graft proved to be worth it, as NOSAY picked up Top Sedan on debut at Summernats 33, and backed that up with Top Sedan at the 2020 Victorian Hot Rod Show a few weeks later.

"We are talking about driving it up to Summernats next year," says Heath. "It was built to drive – that was the whole focus of the car – and we want to prove this is no trailer queen, so I'd like to drive it the five hours up to Canberra."

WE ARE TALKING ABOUT DRIVING IT UP TO SUMMERNATS NEXT YEAR. WE WANT TO PROVE THIS IS NO TRAILER QUEEN

Punters wondering how the Madgwicks plan to drive an LS3-powered EH on the road should know that an engineer has been involved from the get-go. "The EH has had torsion tests, and it'll do a lane-change test before rego," Heath explains. "The shell went off to Melbourne and had a torsion test just to fail so we then had approval to weld the subframe in and make a full-chassis car"

The EH wears PPG Spectre, a colour normally found on an Aston Martin DB10. "When we first started, my dad wanted a gunmetal grey, which I didn't really want as it can look dirty on EHs," says Heath. "We looked at candy red, but everyone was doing that, so Dad decided to go the Aston Martin colour. What really makes it is all the side mouldings; with them on, it looks great"

JACK & HEATH MADGWICK 1964 EH HOLDEN

Paint: PPG Spectre

ENGINE

Brand: 427ci LS3
Induction: Shaun's Custom Alloy ITB
ECU: Autronic
Heads: Brodix
Camshaft: Custom-grind Comp hydraulic-roller
Conrods: Eagle H-beam 6.125in
Pistons: Mahle Performance forged
Crank: Eagle forged 4340, 4.125in
Oil system: Stock
Fuel system: FiTech pump
Cooling: PWR radiator
Exhaust: Custom twin-system
Ignition: LS3 coils, custom leads

TRANSMISSION

Gearbox: Tremec T56 six-speed manual
Clutch: McLeod twin-plate
Diff: Ford 9in, 3.7:1 gears

SUSPENSION & BRAKES

Front: Viking springs and shocks, CRS front end, rack & pinion steering, Ididit column
Rear: Viking springs and shocks, triangulated four-link
Brakes: Wilwood discs (f & r)
Master cylinder: Wilwood

ROLLING STOCK

Wheels: Boyd Coddington Crown Jewel; 17x7 (f), 18x10 (r)
Tyres: Michelin; 215/45/17 (f), 295/30/18 (r)

THANKS

Greg and the team at Maskell's Custom & Classics; North Vic Engines

POWER AND GLORY

STORY BORIS VISKOVIC PHOTOS JORDAN LEIST

KEVIN MANTACH'S '50 CHEV COULD HAVE BECOME A SWEET CUSTOM SLED, BUT AS YOU CAN SEE, THAT'S NOT HIS STYLE

ONE of the biggest hits at *Street Machine* Summernats 33 was Kevin and Jo Mantach's army-themed '50 Chevy coupe – partially because it was completely different to anything else at the event, but also because it is an exceedingly cool build with a tonne of clever touches and design features. While the prevailing trend of burnout car builds over the past few years has been turning the newest car you can find into a tyre-destroyer, Kev has flipped that on its head with one of the earliest cars built to this level.

While all manner of cars have been built over the years with an army theme, more often than not they have USA markings – a white star on the door, for instance – but not this time. Instead, Kev's inspiration comes from his dad's service in Vietnam with the Australian Army, so there's a kangaroo roundel on the door, and emblazoned on the rear guards is his dad's dog-tag number. The finish makes the car look like a battle-weary veteran that's been dragged out of the jungle, with flaking and faded olive-drab paint and weathered markings, but it's actually a very cleverly designed wrap by Ben and his team at SignBiz WA.

Of course, you can't just chuck in a big engine and slap a wrap over a beat-up old car and call it done, and that's most definitely not what happened here. The entire car was built by Geoff and Lauren Black, the father/daughter team that make up Black Magic Race Cars (BMRC). According to the more senior Blacky, "nothing is a problem; there are only solutions, my friend." The car is proof of that, with many challenges faced and overcome.

One part of the car they didn't have to worry about at all was the roof chop. "Whoever chopped it was obviously old school; it's a very, very good job," Blacky says. "When you look inside the roof you can see what was done." As there is no roof lining in the car, that fine metalwork can still be viewed if you ever get the chance to stick your head inside the cabin.

Personally, I'm amazed the car didn't get snapped up by someone and turned into a traditional 50s-style custom. The chop on it is absolutely spot-on. "That's what caught my eye when I first saw it; I just loved the shape. You just don't see them around here," says Kev.

The chop is about the only part of the car that wasn't changed, though; everything else was cut away and BMRC fabricated an entirely new chassis, firewall and floorpan. As you have probably figured out by his business's name, Blacky is all about building race cars, and that's pretty much how he approached this burnout build. "I'm a big believer in the safety side of things. At the speeds they tip in at, shit's starting to get fast and dangerous," he says. "To do what we needed to do, it was easier for me to just build it like a race car; then we could put stuff wherever we wanted and make it all work."

The other benefits to building it this way were serviceability and an overall minimalist approach where there's nothing on the car that doesn't absolutely have to be there. Each bracket has a multitude of uses, and the entire front clip slides forward and tilts for super-easy access to the engine. One thing everyone really wanted to avoid was putting a cut in the front guard like many flip-front conversions have; hence the slide-and-tilt solution.

All of that stuff is a walk in the park for BMRC, but Blacky did have to take himself out of his comfort zone to build the headers and exhaust: "Normally we get Norm Butler to do all our exhausts; he's the best at it. I rang him up and said: 'Norm, what do you do when you want to run a two-inch primary on a small-block?' He said: 'Blacky, you know how you've got chassis tricks? I've got exhaust tricks.' A lot of people

IT LOOKS LIKE A BATTLE-WEARY VETERAN THAT'S BEEN DRAGGED OUT OF THE JUNGLE, WITH FLAKING AND FADED OLIVE-DRAB PAINT AND WEATHERED MARKINGS

TAILPIPES: "Kev really wanted machine-gun tailpipes, so I said: 'Leave it with me; I'll see what I can come up with,'" says Blacky

ENGINE: Just about everyone's favourite feature is the blower belt guard made from .50-calibre bullets. Lauren did that bit

FLIP FRONT: The front panels were bolted together and the whole lot slides and tilts for easy engine access. Behind the front wheel you can see one of the car's four pneumatic lift jacks

THAT'S A WRAP: Around 90 hours went into the design of the wrap, which looks for all the world like a faded and peeling army-green paintjob. The team at SignBiz WA did four test wraps before applying the final product

would take that the wrong way, but I looked at it and thought: You're challenging me here.

"So, we designed all the header plates and built it all, and because I've always worked on race cars, you can get a 9/16 ratchet spanner and pop the pipes off. You don't have to take the pipes out of the car; they roll to the side and you can pull the engine out." For a bloke that doesn't make exhausts, he sure did a bang-up job!

BMRC has built a bit of a reputation among the burnout crowd for its four-link set-ups, but it always intrigued me how you go from building something designed to minimise wheelspin to a car whose sole purpose is destroying tyres.

At the end of the day, it's more about packaging than anything else, according to Lauren. "In burnout cars, you have to try and fit everything into the available space, whereas in a race car you've got certain lengths in the four-link that you have to work with to make it work correctly," she says. "Most burnout cars have a really short four-link bar, about half the length it would normally be." Although it hasn't really been designed to hook up on a track, Blacky reckons he could get it to work – it's got plenty of adjustment in it. That'd be worth seeing!

Those of you who follow the burnout scene would be familiar with Kev's other car, his purple One Tonner, ALCOTRAZ. It's a proven performer, so it's no surprise that he's gone with a very similar engine combo here: a Littlefield-blown, 400ci small-block Chev. "Derek Paulik has been building engines for me for years, so it was a no-brainer sticking to what works," he says. "The bottom end is the same, but we changed the heads, manifold, bigger blower, different hat." Well, if some is good, more must be better.

BNR Engines takes the credit for being the only business outside of WA to have helped make the big girl go. "Derek built the motor, but Brett at BNR Engines tuned it," Kev says. "I just shipped the whole fuel system over to him, went right through the motor as to what was in it, and he just set it all to that." The car hasn't been on a dyno at all, but Kev estimates it will make somewhere around 1300-1400hp.

What makes this build even more impressive is that the Mantachs are from Ravensthorpe, about a six-hour drive south-east of Perth, and are very proud of the fact that the car was built in WA. "We tried our best to use WA businesses and thought it would be nice to have a WA-built car to take east and reveal at Summernats. Well, we did it! We came home with an unexpected Top 60 trophy and 2nd Top Engineered. Not bad, I reckon, for a car built for burnouts!"

For those of you who think Kev and Jo might have 'wrecked a classic', don't worry: Kev assures me that the only things that got wrecked were the bank balance and Jo's mental health!

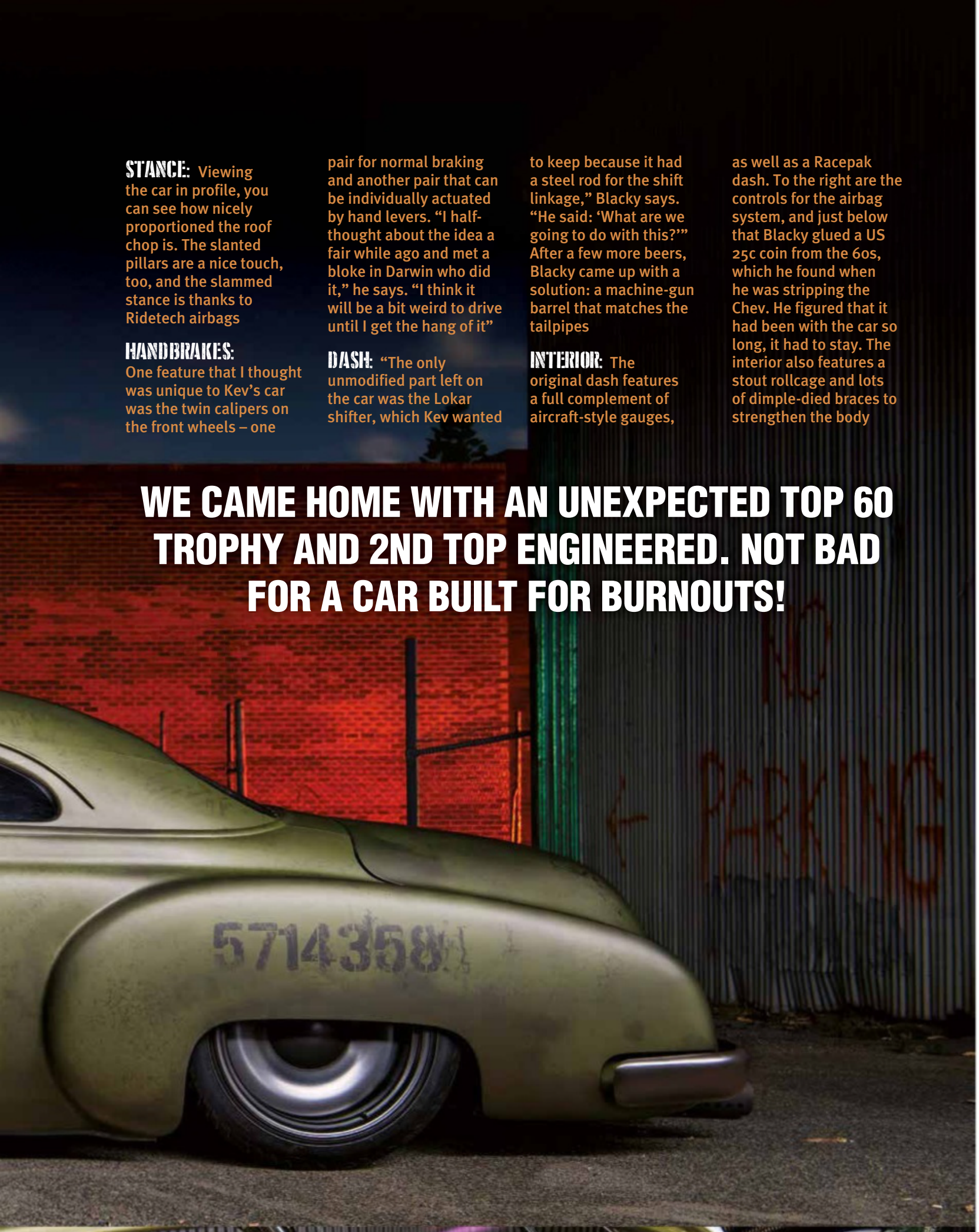
STANCE: Viewing the car in profile, you can see how nicely proportioned the roof chop is. The slanted pillars are a nice touch, too, and the slammed stance is thanks to Ridetech airbags

HANDBRAKES: One feature that I thought was unique to Kev's car was the twin calipers on the front wheels – one pair for normal braking and another pair that can be individually actuated by hand levers. "I half-thought about the idea a fair while ago and met a bloke in Darwin who did it," he says. "I think it will be a bit weird to drive until I get the hang of it"

DASH: "The only unmodified part left on the car was the Lokar shifter, which Kev wanted to keep because it had a steel rod for the shift linkage," Blacky says. "He said: 'What are we going to do with this?'" After a few more beers, Blacky came up with a solution: a machine-gun barrel that matches the tailpipes

INTERIOR: The original dash features a full complement of aircraft-style gauges, as well as a Racepak dash. To the right are the controls for the airbag system, and just below that Blacky glued a US 25c coin from the 60s, which he found when he was stripping the Chev. He figured that it had been with the car so long, it had to stay. The interior also features a stout rollcage and lots of dimple-died braces to strengthen the body

WE CAME HOME WITH AN UNEXPECTED TOP 60 TROPHY AND 2ND TOP ENGINEERED. NOT BAD FOR A CAR BUILT FOR BURNOUTS!



KEVIN & JO MANTACH 1950 CHEVROLET COUPE

Paint: Military-inspired wrap by SignBiz WA

DONK

Type: 400ci Chevrolet
Block: Dart Little M
Inlet: Custom-built
Blower: Littlefield 8/71
Heads: Brodix
Cam: Custom grind
Pistons: Custom forged
Crank: Callies forged
Radiator: Brown's alloy radiator, twin thermos
Exhaust: BMRC headers, 2in primaries, twin 4in system
Ignition: ProMag 20-amp

SHIFT

'Box: Powerglide
Converter: 3500rpm stall
Diff: Sheet-metal 9in with 40-spline centre

BENEATH

Front end: Tubular IFS
Shocks: Ridetech ShockWave airbags
Steering: Rack-and-pinion
Brakes: Wilwood discs and twin calipers (front only)

ROLLING STOCK

Rims: Detroit Steel Smoothie; 18x8 (f), 20x14 (r)
Rubber: 235/40ZR18 (f), M/T 29.0x15x20 (r)

THANKS

My two sons Colt and Kye for all the hours they have put into the car; my wife Jo – nothing would have been completed without her support, but the build probably wouldn't have got out of hand, either!; Lauren, Blacky and Sandra at Black Magic Race Cars; the team at SignBiz WA; River Road Smash; Paulilk Engines; BNR Engines; Jeff Johnson at Streetbuilt Racing; Pro-Tech Powdercoaters; Brown's Radiators; McMullens Blinds & Canvas; Scruffy

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STORY JACK HOULIHAN
PHOTOS ALISTAIR RITCHIE

KIWI FRUIT

WE HEAD TO NEW ZEALAND'S SOUTH ISLAND TO CHECK OUT THE DELIGHTFULLY DIFFERENT AUTOMOTIVE BUFFET ON OFFER AT MUSCLE CAR MADNESS

TOUCHING down in Christchurch on a warm Friday afternoon, I wasn't quite sure what to expect from Muscle Car Madness. Though I'd been given a vague rundown of the Kiwi car scene, I was a first-timer to the Land of the Long White Cloud, let alone its automotive culture.

As a complete newcomer, I figured there'd be an abundance of Australian muscle cars with the odd American machine thrown in for good measure. But nothing could have prepared me for what I found when I walked through the gates of the Rangiora Showground, about half an hour north of Christchurch.

A bonanza of Yank metal stretched as far as the eye could see, interspersed with an assortment of Aussie Holdens, Fords and Chryslers. Al, my guide and photographer for the weekend, pointed out that liberal import restrictions and a strong NZ dollar had seen a huge amount of US stuff hit Kiwi shores in various states of repair. They're cheaper and easier to keep on the road in NZ than Australia, too. Provided you can pass a basic 'warrant of fitness' inspection each year, left-hand-drives of any vintage are fair game, and annual registration is a fraction of what we're slugged across the ditch.

Left-hookers seemed to dominate the 30th

A BONANZA OF YANK METAL STRETCHED AS FAR AS THE EYE COULD SEE, INTERSPERSED WITH AUSSIE HOLDENS, FORDS AND CHRYSLERS

Brendon Shearing's twin-turbo, 509ci Monaro is fully engineered and street legal! The dry-sump, all-alloy Donovan donk has made 1585hp on the dyno with 22psi of boost. "There's more in it with better boost control," Brendon said. He's so far pedalled the car to a 7.9@195mph on North Island strips

Father-son duo Andrew and Lachlan Kennett stuck an XC Falcon body on top of an Isuzu Bighorn just for this year's event. The Sefton locals threw together the *Mad Max*-style build over two months of weekends. Andrew's a regular to the show, with 25 attendances to his name and a variety of muscle in his garage. He said 17-year-old Lachlan is the motivating force behind much of their work, providing his own angles and ideas

Dubbed 'Revenge Edition' after a workshop break-in left his last project stripped to the ground, Matt Jukic's '68 Charger proves he can't be kept down. His first tilt at a classic, the Yank coupe features a blown 440 with a shot of nitrous and meth injection in reserve. A 727 Torqueflite and 8 3/4in Chrysler diff keep the driveline all Mopar, while the tubular front end is packed with QA1 suspension gear

Gasser-fied in 1968, Chris Hornblow's street-driven, avgas-drinking '56 Chevy runs a cast-head 350 wearing a tunnel ram and twin 650 double-pumper carbs. Aside from a fibreglass front, the car is all metal, and runs reliable 11.4sec quarter-mile times

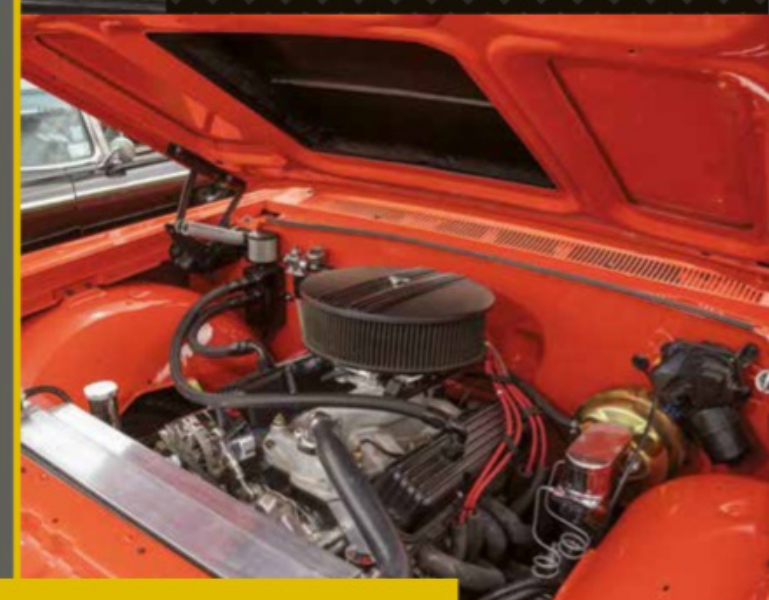
Gary Norris's well-travelled '53 Henry J was one of many gassers in Rangiora over the weekend. It's currently powered by an injected Chrysler 440, with a Torqueflite transmission and '59 Oldsmobile rear. Gary bought the racer in 1985, and now has a 9.99sec ET to his name

Built for having a bit of a laugh with the boys, Michael Ledgerwood's ratty KE10 Corolla harnesses a Lexus-sourced 1UZ V8. With an ITB set-up on worked heads, a strengthened chassis and shortened HiLux diff, it's a dedicated skid weapon. His efforts this year landed Michael equal third in the burnout comp

Muscle Car Madness, with unusual metal like Oldsmobile Tornados and De Tomaso Panteras brushing shoulders with slammed Impalas and Buicks. The American theme was bolstered by a strong complement of old-school hot rods and gassers, which emerged as crowd favourites on the dirt cruising circuit. The insidious 'purist' mindset doesn't seem to have wormed its way this far south of the equator, either. For every XY GT mock-up in attendance, there were two wearing primer and jellybean mags.

To find out more about what makes the place tick, I tracked down event founder and local legend Craig Stare. He was kicking back in his onsite caravan, enjoying a beer and "stressing about not being stressed". He recounted the genesis of Muscle Car Madness, now three decades ago: "We thought it would be a nice little spot to run a show. The first year we had 44 cars; this year, there's 2500 staying here."

While we chatted, a steady stream of orange-clad teenagers moved in and out of the temporary HQ, each with a task to accomplish. "A lot of our workforce has been young people," Craig told me. "People's kids got bored, so we



THE INSIDIOUS 'PURIST' MINDSET DOESN'T SEEM TO HAVE WORMED ITS WAY THIS FAR SOUTH OF THE EQUATOR

Ian Pakii is one of an elite few to have never missed a Muscle Car Madness. This year, his 'Swiss Cheese'-inspired '63 Pontiac Catalina made its debut. These fabled factory racers were heavily lightened, before being nixed by GM in an anti-racing blitz. His Super Stock-style build runs a Dart 410 block, Turbo 350 automatic and Ford 9in rear

Grant Findley's 'Knight Moves' Buick brought a touch of class to Muscle Car Madness. Inspired by the famed Hirohata Mercury, the '50 Sedanette wears '53 Merc chrome, which set Wellington-based builder Paul Knight back US$2500 – and that was two decades ago! The donk is a 425ci Olds, mated to a Turbo 400 auto and 9in diff. According to Grant, it's a reliable set-up for lengthy trips – like the seven-hour drive up to MCM from his home in Gore

With Hotwires, an aftermarket sunroof and shrunken steering wheel, Briana Ireland's old-school LH Torana harks back to the glory days of street machining. The 308 up front feeds to a Trimatic auto and Ford 8in diff. Kade de Vries' LC Torana hides a boosted 202, put together solely by the apprentice refrigeration mechanic. The blow-through turbo powerplant is backed by a W58 Toyota 'box and shortened 3.08 Holden diff

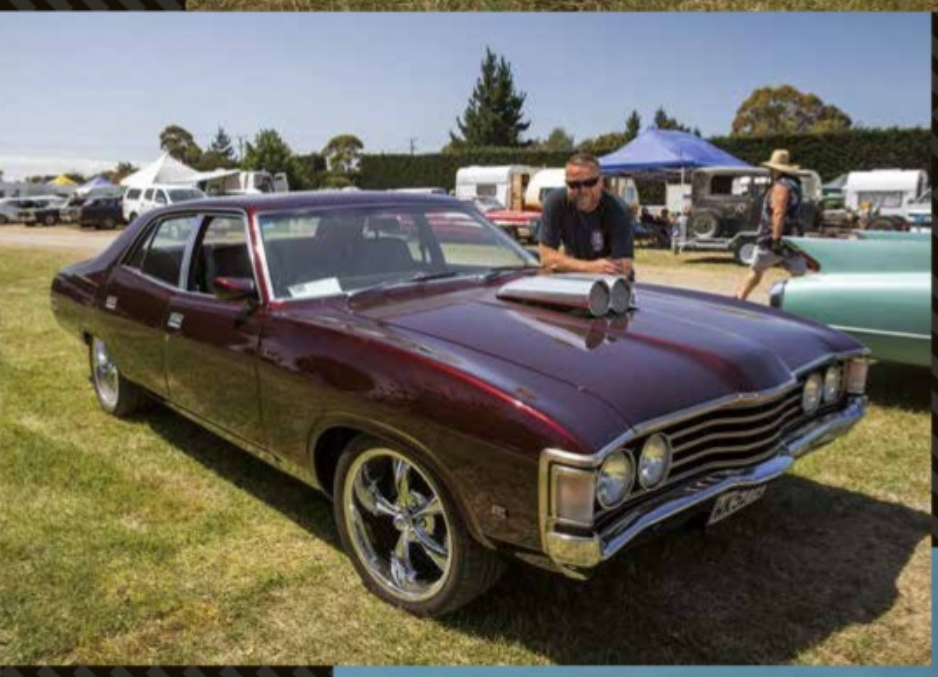
Herb Lane's 1937 Oliver tractor is powered by a tandem-mounted 327 Chev and 302 Windsor, with a torque converter between them. Aptly named 'Oliver Twist', Herb said the home-built rig can easily be converted back to stock, "just to please the tractor purists out there!"

Russell Lowe's Model A isn't your typical hot rod; in case you missed it, there's a flame-spitting, 1650ci Rover Meteor engine up front! Extracted from a Centurion tank, the all-alloy V12 is an OHC design with four valves per cylinder – not bad for an engine designed in the 30s! Russell gifted it a 16/71 blower generating 6psi of boost, and on paper the set-up is good for 1000hp and 175mph

Ian Neary's SEMA-grade, V10 Viper-powered Plymouth GTX made its first MCM appearance and took home the Best Mopar trophy, pulling crowds of stunned onlookers to the Mothers stand across the weekend. Ian said the car has been getting around the country regularly, and now bears a message from living legend Chip Foose: "If I took it in for *Overhaulin'*, I wouldn't give it back!"

Steve Allan stuffed a cammed LS1 in a patinaed Oldsmobile Rocket 88. It also received an inch in the sills, a four-link rear end and airbags all 'round. The Rangiora-based custom builder said the car previously sat in a police compound for 12 years, with a bullet-peppered side window!

According to GT nut Dwayne McLaren, this chop-topped XW Falcon wagon was “pretty much a piece of rubbish” when he came across it, though it had been strengthened and road-certified as roofless. The car now runs a 302 Cleveland brought out to 351 cubes, and Dwayne was an early Kiwi adopter of FiTech injection, which he also runs on his XW burnout ute. “It’s really driveable, but it’ll bark up if you want it to,” he said



We spotted this glorious Big Red Car replica cruising the show. Owner Jay Elliot gave this Beetle a loving Wiggles-themed restoration, and said that it had carried 16 passengers at once. “It’ll be 20 before the end of the night,” he laughed

Fresh from a tilt at this year’s Summernats Burnout Masters competition, Hayden Wilby assaulted the MCM pad in his NUTOUT VT SS Commodore. Unusually for a burnout car, the 6/71-blown LS1 is matched with a six-speed manual

WE THOUGHT IT WOULD BE A NICE LITTLE SPOT TO RUN A SHOW. THE FIRST YEAR WE HAD 44 CARS; THIS YEAR, THERE’S 2500 STAYING HERE

gave them jobs to do, and it snowballed from there.”

It’s a reflection of the event’s multi-generational atmosphere. At Muscle Car Madness, kids are free to roam after hours on pushbikes, motorised scooters and virtually any other wheeled implement you could imagine. They also learn what is and isn’t acceptable behaviour from the older cohort. “Everybody polices each other,” Craig pointed out. “If somebody’s doing something wrong, the campers tell them.” Maybe this was why the security guards were all smiles.

While the cars I saw in Rangiora were astounding in both quality and variety, it was the culture embodied by Muscle Car Madness that left the biggest mark on me. Craig said that everybody was family there, and I don’t doubt him. The event highlights the wonderful set of customs, established over decades, that has culminated in this sprawling network of old and new mates – even if it’s just for one weekend a year.

THE FAMILY *Silver*

MAT BONE'S IDEA OF A SIMPLE FAMILY CRUISER IS A BIT WILDER THAN MOST, WITH 434CI OF BLOWN CHEVY POWERING HIS HK WAGON

STORY KIAN HEAGNEY PHOTOS CHRIS THOROGOOD

I DIDN'T WANT TO PUT ANY GTS STUFF INTO IT; I JUST WANTED TO KEEP IT STANDARD WITH SOME IMPROVEMENT

THE phrase 'the build snowballed' is one that gets thrown around by car tragics on the regular, but let's be honest with ourselves for a moment: There's no such thing as a simple project. For Mat Bone, what was supposed to be just an engine swap on a tidy HK wagon quickly turned into an all-out job, but I'm sure you'd agree the end result was worth it.

"I bought the car when it popped up in Melbourne because it was a together and driveable Kingswood wagon, running a 307," Mat says. "So I picked it up and I was going to put a stroked small-block Chevy in it."

Mat ended up getting his hands on the 434ci Dart Chevy block currently at home in the wagon, but it needed some help. "It was damaged when we got it, so I took it to James Melmoth at Melway Competition Engines to get it to where I wanted," he says.

The Dart copped an Eagle crank, H-beam rods and JE pistons, a custom-grind MCE cam package and a pair of AFR 245 heads for easy breathing. Topping off the whole shebang is the BDS 8/71 blower, fed by 2000cc injectors slotted inside the sneaky Joe Blo hat that pokes its way out of the bonnet. The MicroTech ECU was tuned for both E85 and pump 98, with E85 yielding not only more ponies, but also better reliability. "It runs cooler on E85, so that was the main reason for having ethanol; not so much the power," Mat says. "I was keen for 1000hp, but on the engine dyno it made 965hp and ran spot-on, so I was happy with that; that's how it stayed."

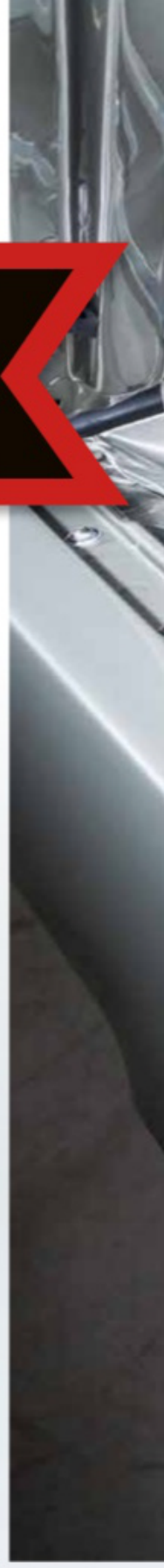
Interior

Mat wanted to keep the interior simple, improving on the factory Kingswood fit-out without going for the full GTS replica kit that many get sucked into doing. A colour change from green to Goya Red was all that was needed to give the inside some serious pop

Boot

Despite the mini-tubs, the wagon hasn't lost its practical boot space, still making it ideal for a Sunday picnic cruise with the family

ON THE ENGINE DYNO IT MADE 965HP AND RAN SPOT-ON, SO I WAS HAPPY WITH THAT



MAT BONE
1968 HOLDEN HK KINGSWOOD WAGON
Paint: PPG Silver Mink

ENGINE
Brand: Dart Chevy 434ci
Induction: BDS 8/71
ECU: MicroTech
Heads: AFR 245
Camshaft: MCE custom-grind
Conrods: H-beam
Pistons: JE
Crank: Eagle
Fuel system: Holley 1600 Dominator pump
Cooling: Aussie Desert Cooler radiator
Exhaust: 2in primaries, 3in system
Ignition: MSD

TRANSMISSION
Gearbox: Powerglide
Converter: Dominator
Diff: 9in, 31-spline axles, 3.7:1 gears

SUSPENSION & BRAKES
Front: King SSL springs, Monroe shocks
Rear: Reset ute leaf springs, Monroe shocks
Brakes: Wilwood discs (f), HQ drums (r)
Master cylinder: Wilwood

WHEELS & TYRES
Rims: Weld AlumaStar; 15x5 (f), 15x9 (r)
Rubber: 195/65/R15 (f), 295/50/R15 (r)

THANKS
Lisa, Akaya and Natika; Brad Simpson; Leigh Haintz; Jason Domaschenze; Ash Hodgson; Barry Hewitt; Dom Stillitano; Nathan Robertson; James Melmoth; Craig Dyson; Rinx

The Chev is backed by a Powerglide with a Dominator converter, and a nine-inch rear end sporting 31-spline axles, all of which funnels grunt to 15x9in AlumaStar rear boots.

Before Mat slotted the fresh donk in place of the original 307ci item, he wanted to get the black engine bay painted to match the Silver Mink exterior. That turned into an extensive exercise. “We took it in to get it painted, but the PPG Silver Mink wasn’t right against the mismatched paint on the exterior,” Mat says. “We figured out the body colour wasn’t actually 100 per cent right, so rather than trying to colour-match the engine bay, I made the decision to have the whole car sprayed in the correct colour.” Dom Stillitano from Hardcore Restorations was given the task of refreshing the HK’s striking silver duco, going above and beyond to achieve a show-quality finish.

Before the reassembly process began, Mat had the old green interior binned in favour of a striking new Goya Red layout, but didn’t want to stray far from what Holden had intended in the late 60s. “I didn’t want to put any GTS stuff into it, because it isn’t a GTS; I just wanted to keep it standard with some improvement,” he says. “That’s why it still uses the column shifter for the Powerglide rather than a big ratchet shifter.” The new interior was sourced from Winner Products, using a Premier front bench seat and original Holden hardware where possible. However, when the HK was being put back together, it became obvious to Mat that it was going to need a set of mini-tubs to fit decent-sized rear meats to handle the grunt.

Eight Track

WHILE it may seem hard to believe now, there was a time when you didn't have the option of buying a Holden with a V8 up front. The release of the HK in 1968 changed all that with the plucky 307 under the bonnet, kicking off generations of Holdens stuffed with bent-eights until the demise of local production in 2017. Needless to say, the blown 434ci Dart Chev in Mat's HK is a far cry from the original 307-cuber the wagon rolled off the line with all those years ago.

Engine Bay

When Mat got his hands on the car the engine bay was black, which wouldn't do in a silver car. Anything that wasn't needed to keep the blown Chevy alive was binned, but the sheet metal remained largely unchanged to keep in theme with the build

Rolling

Mat mini-tubbed the car to allow for chunky 295 tyres on the rear. The 15x5 and 15x9 Weld AlumaStars not only look tough, but also nicely complement the wagon's Silver Mink duco

IT DOESN'T REALLY GO FORWARD WHEN YOU PUT THE BOOT INTO IT; IT JUST SMOKES THE REARS INSTEAD

"We fitted the tubs at home very carefully with some help from an experienced mate, and it turned out really well," Mat says. "It's a good thing he made room for some extra rubber, because the wagon is still unruly to steer even with 295 tyres in the rear. It doesn't really go forward when you put the boot into it; it just smokes the rears instead."

The super-smooth wagon has been finished for around a year now, but it hasn't seen the light of day much since its completion. "The first time it really came out was for these photos; it's partly been me keeping the car under wraps and partly a busy work schedule," Mat says. "It hasn't been a secret, but I haven't been very public with the car yet. Now it's been in the mag, I'll probably get it out a lot more and just enjoy it with the kids."

Mat doesn't have any intentions of hitting up the strip with the big beast, opting to keep it to its cruising roots. "I obviously haven't driven it very far, but when I have it's driven really well," he says. "I'll probably take it to things like MotorEx and enjoy it now.

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GOING FOR Gold

JUSTIN GAUCI SPENT NINE YEARS BUILDING HIS SMOOTH XR FALCON ONLY TO FIND HE CRAVED MORE POWER. IT WAS TIME TO GO BIG OR GO HOME

STORY IAIN KELLY PHOTOS CHRIS THOROGOOD

CAN you remember what you got for your 13th birthday? If you were Justin Gauci, you'd never forget, because the lucky so-and-so was gifted a '67 XR Falcon sedan from his dad! Now, before you go stomping off to yell at your old boy for not getting you a sweet ride for your first teenage birthday, Justin's XR didn't look anything like the beautiful gold machine you here.

"Dad bought it for $600," Justin says. "It was a bare Falcon 500 shell with no wiring or anything, so we had to put it together piece by piece over the years." In fact, it took nearly a decade of hard work and toil to build this 700rwhp turbocharged weapon!

"The body needed a bit of work," Justin says. "We had the guy who does the rust work on our cars fit a whole set of floorpans; plus it needed rear quarters, both inner and outer sills, and new front doors. "It took about 18 months, as there weren't that many parts for XRs floating around back when we were building it nine years ago."

Once Justin's dad had the body straight, PPG GT Gold was laid over the Mustang-bred Falcon shell, paying tribute to Ford's first high-performance Falcon, the 289ci XR GT.

"I tried to be a little bit different with the XR, which is why I did the gold body with the white GT interior," says Justin. "Once I got it painted and got it home, it took four years to get it done. We spent a lot of time finding parts, building up a collection and then trying to sell them off to afford better bits and pieces. I wasn't earning huge bucks as an apprentice so there was always a budget to work to, so it took time."

The car was no slouch when it came to the drivetrain, either, with a tough aspirated 347-cube Windsor stroker living under the four-inch reverse-cowl bonnet. However, while it packed more snot than pretty much any factory fast-Falcon, it left Justin wanting.

INTERIOR: The Falcon was an empty, bare shell when Justin acquired it, so C&N Trimming took on the job of redoing all the interior parts that he had to source to fit his XR out. Parchment-coloured XR GT buckets offer a comfy place to cruise, with standard-spec seatbelts, steering wheel and carpet lending a classic look

DASH: "I was trying to do something a bit different by fitting the Auto Meter gauges in the GT dash," Justin says. "But I've actually replaced them; I have now fitted a full Holley dash." The Innovate wideband datalogger mounted ahead of the B&M shifter has also been replaced thanks to the new dash's logging capabilities

IT MADE A BIT OF STEAM FOR WHAT IT WAS AND RAN 11.30 ASPIRATED, BUT I KNEW THAT JUST WASN'T QUICK ENOUGH

ENGINE: The tough SBF is kept cool with a PWR radiator and Davies Craig thermo fans, while LS1 coil packs and MSD leads handle igniting the E85 go-juice. An Aeroflow front-mounted air-to-air intercooler chills the compressed intake charge to keep detonation at bay

ECU: "I did some research on what ECU I should run, and I noticed a lot of cars are going fast with the Holley ECU," says Justin. "It's an affordable product for what you get"

"It was a cast block and headed Windsor with a solid flat-tappet cam making 492hp at the flywheel, so it wasn't really what I'd call a flash engine," Justin says. "It made a bit of steam for what it was and ran 11.30 aspirated, but I knew that just wasn't quick enough.

"It was on the road for maybe seven months when I decided to sell off the aspirated drivetrain and go for a whole new turbo set-up. When I told Dad I was taking it off the road after all that time building it, he thought I was crazy! I pretty much had to do everything in the engine, 'box and diff all over again."

With his vast experience managing turbocharged V8s, Bill from Garage Worx was called upon to screw together a serious small-block Ford, starting with a new Dart Windsor block. He jammed it full of good gear like 9.3:1 compression Diamond pistons, Carrillo rods and bolts and a custom-grind turbo-spec Flowcraft solid-roller cam, while an Eagle crank pushes displacement to 347 cubes.

The stout bottom end wears deep-breathing AFR 225 heads topped off by an Edelbrock Victor Jr single-plane intake packing eight 2200cc fuel injectors. They swallow E85 provided by three Walbro 460 pumps, and are controlled by a Holley HP EFI brainbox.

But the real power adder is the front-mounted Garrett GTX45 snail sitting on custom manifolds and blowing spent gases out a four-inch stainless exhaust system. Being fed just 7psi boost, with 20 degrees of ignition timing and revving to only 6200rpm, the XR pushed out 540rwhp!

"It then made 710rwhp on 16psi and running a mild tune," Justin says.

EVERY EXTRA POUND OF BOOST BILL PUTS IN IT IS GIVING US ANOTHER 100HP

JUSTIN GAUCI
1967 FORD FALCON XR GT
Paint: PPG GT Gold

ENGINE
Brand: Dart Windsor 347ci
Induction: Edelbrock Victor Jr
ECU: Holley HP EFI
Turbo: Garrett GTX45
Heads: AFR 225
Camshaft: Custom Flowcraft turbo grind
Conrods: Carrillo
Pistons: Diamond
Crank: Eagle
Oil system: Standard
Fuel system: 2200cc injectors, three Walbro 460L/h pumps
Cooling: PWR radiator, Davies Craig thermo fans
Exhaust: Single 4in system
Ignition: LS1 coils, MSD leads

TRANSMISSION
Gearbox: C6 three-speed auto
Converter: Dominator 3200rpm
Diff: 9in, US Gear 3.25:1 final ratio, 31-spline billet axles

SUSPENSION & BRAKES
Front: 90/10 shocks, Pedders springs, XY steering
Rear: Standard leaf springs, Calvert nine-way adjustable shocks
Brakes: Wilwood four-pot discs (f), GT drums (r)
Master cylinder: Wilwood

WHEELS & TYRES
Rims: Weld AlumaStar 17in (f), Weldstar 15x8 (r)
Rubber: M/T Sportsman (f), M/T ET Street 275/50 (r)

THANKS
My mum, dad Chris, brother Matt and sister Nicole for all the support and help; Bill Elhaouli and the boys at Garage Worx; Eugene at Flowcraft; John & Mick at Race Parts Melbourne; Matt at MDT; Trevor at Tranzco; Raz at Raz's Diffs; Admir for all the electrical work; the boys at Showroom Finish; Ryan at First Choice Polishing; Matt at Gauci's Towing Service; all my mates, including Sam, James, Christian, Jake and Robbie; Charlie at C&N Trimming; Eren for fab work

“Every extra pound of boost Bill puts in it is giving us another 100hp.”

Fortunately, the XR has a cogbox that can handle the extra neddies. “I actually blew up the transmission I had for the aspirated combo two or three times before I got Matt from MDT to build a serious C6,” Justin says. “The new ’box is a full-house, reverse-pattern transbraked thing that he’s gone right through.”

The old 4.3:1 rear was going to leave the mustard decidedly uncut, so a set of 3.25:1 gears were added to the nine-inch housing, which also packs 31-spline billet axles and swings off standard leaf springs controlled by nine-way adjustable Calvert Racing shocks. Up front, classic 90/10 drag shocks are paired with Pedders coil springs and an XY steering box to sharpen the feel.

“I’m hoping to run in the mid-to-high eights,” Justin says. “But before I run it at the strip, I have to get it tech-inspected, so that means I need to ’cage it, and I might mini-tub and four-link it, too.

“It drives great, for a boat,” he quips. “At 100km/h it sits on 2500rpm and it cruises beautifully – nice and quiet. I’ve probably done 5000km since it was back on the road turbocharged, and I drive it everywhere! I have done a bunch of weddings; I’ve driven it to work. If I get caught in the rain, so be it.” Hey, with 700 neddies at your disposal, who cares about a bit of precipitation?

Stopping duties are handled by Wilwood four-piston disc brakes up front, with GT-spec drums living out back on the 9in diff. The fluid is pushed by a Wilwood master cylinder. Wheels are 17in Weld AlumaStars on the turning end, with 15x8 Weldstars wrapped in 275/50 M/T ET Street radials out back

AT 100KM/H IT SITS ON 2500RPM AND IT CRUISES BEAUTIFULLY. I’VE PROBABLY DONE 5000KM SINCE IT WAS BACK ON THE ROAD TURBOCHARGED

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A Star is Born

IN PART TWO OF OUR COMMODORE EULOGY, FORMER HOLDEN EMPLOYEES RECALL THEIR TIME AT THE PRODUCTION COALFACE

LAST month, we farewelled the Holden Commodore for a second time, trawling the fast, the rare and the practical steeds that peppered the Aussie car's legacy. We also canvassed our colleagues and friends to get their stories, recollections, likes and dislikes about the General's local hero accumulated over four decades of manufacturing history.

But those reminiscences were limited to the receiving end of the process; even when new, these cars were delivered unto us fully formed. But for every Commodore that exists, there was a moment when it was born.

So we sat down with a bunch of blokes for whom the Commodore was not merely a car, but a career. People like Shane Dale, who took the doors off after painting, and 'Gumpy' Willoughby who put them back on. People like Shaun Tanner, who stepped in when the machines of industry went awry, and me, who may have installed the mudflaps.

And finally, people like Phil Zmood, who penned the Commodore's very form throughout the 80s and 90s, creating the contours that are now so familiar to us, indelibly altering the Australian streetscape in the process.

Shaun Tanner

MAINTENANCE FITTER, HF V6 LINE - HOLDEN ENGINE OPERATIONS, FISHERMANS BEND

I STARTED my mechanical fitter's apprenticeship through Holden in 2004, working on the Family II four-cylinder line at Fishermans Bend. My job was to ensure that the engine plant machinery kept running; I handled preventative maintenance and addressed any breakdowns. Sometimes it would be an easy fix such as replacing a part that had worn out of spec. Sometimes you'd be rebuilding half the machine.

As my career progressed, I did some work in the foundry where we cast engine blocks, disc brakes, steering knuckles and exhaust manifolds. I briefly shifted to Experimental where I machined up some spacers at the boss's request, but he wouldn't tell me what they were for. Turns out they went into the Efijy concept car.

From 2008 I worked maintenance in Plant 18 where we machined the heads, blocks and cranks for the High Feature V6, as well as handled final assembly. Better known as the Alloytec here in Australia, we built over 30 different variants and exported nearly 700,000 of them to companies like Saab and Alfa Romeo. The V6 was designed to suit both front- and rear-wheel-drive applications, came in a range of capacities and included turbocharged versions. Our assembly machinery could adapt to build any of the variants with a minimum of fuss. We were acknowledged as one of the most flexible factories in General Motors.

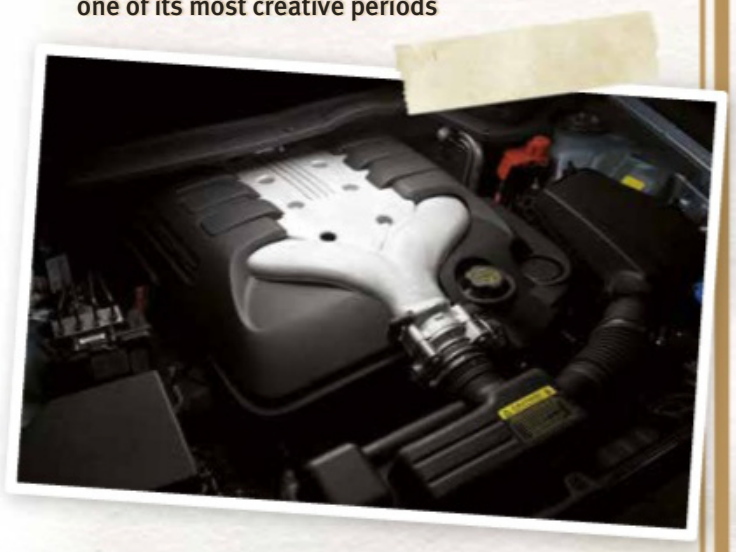
I think the real trouble at Holden began even before I started, after Peter Hanenberger retired in 2003. He was such a fan; he believed in Holden. He even had them build him a left-hand-drive Monaro to take home to Germany when he left.

Mark Reuss was a proper car guy too, and when he returned home to the States he took an FC Holden back with him. But he was fighting an uphill battle against not only market changes but also all the FI-FO bosses that rattled through for a year or two who couldn't adapt to and build on Holden's place in our culture. I'm not sure whose call it was to start importing Korean stuff like the Viva, Epica and Captiva, but that's when the Holden name started to become devalued in the eyes of the public, I feel.

Now it's all gone. Well, it all went a couple of years ago, but the recent cancellation of the ZB Commodore just hit it home again, reminding us that we've lost so much. I remember when I was given a tiny, cast-iron Family II block, no bigger than a couple of matchboxes, commissioned to celebrate four million units built since 1981. The very fact that Holden could create its own souvenir is something we'll never see the likes of again.

It was the best place I've ever worked, by far. It was just like a big family. We've lost more than the Commodore. We've lost a can-do manufacturing culture and we're not getting it back.

ABOVE: Shaun reckons that Holden lost a lot when former MD Peter Hanenberger retired in 2003. Not only was he the father of Radial Tuned Suspension, he also led Holden through one of its most creative periods



WE'VE LOST MORE THAN THE COMMODORE. WE'VE LOST A CAN-DO MANUFACTURING CULTURE AND WE'RE NOT GETTING IT BACK

Dave Carey

FACTORY HAND - HOLDEN BY DESIGN, ELIZABETH

IT HAD been a bit of a dream of mine to get work in the Holden factory; I'd always been a Holden enthusiast after all, so the opportunity to help build the things was alluring. I ended up getting a gig at Holden By Design, albeit briefly, in the late 1990s.

The HBD area handled a variety of off-line tasks, including fitting the chrome sports bars to a batch of VSIII SS utes. I'd never really wielded the tools in anger before, so when I started fitting the bars I wasn't the slickest gun. I wasn't much good at percussively persuading the tabs to line up and I was constantly in trouble for standing on swarf in the rear tub. That being said, whenever I see a rare VSIII SS ute, I get a bit excited; I may have bonked that car with a mallet, or installed the sticker that read: "Do not tie heavy loads to this bar."

An easier job was preparing cars for export. It was the height of a scorching Adelaide summer and these Saudi-spec left-hookers sat baking in a holding yard before HBD got to them. It was my job to drive them through a car wash and then into the shed. I became expert at swiftly cranking the air con or mashing the climate control before whacking them in drive and taking off. The whole process took about a second.

Repeated action develops a significant degree of muscle memory, so I was completely thrown when I hopped in a Saudi-spec car with a manual trans. It only happened twice out of the hundreds of cars I moved, but both times it was like I'd forgotten how to drive. My 'unconscious competence' had fallen out the window and I had to really think when I pulled the gearstick towards me and into first with my right hand.

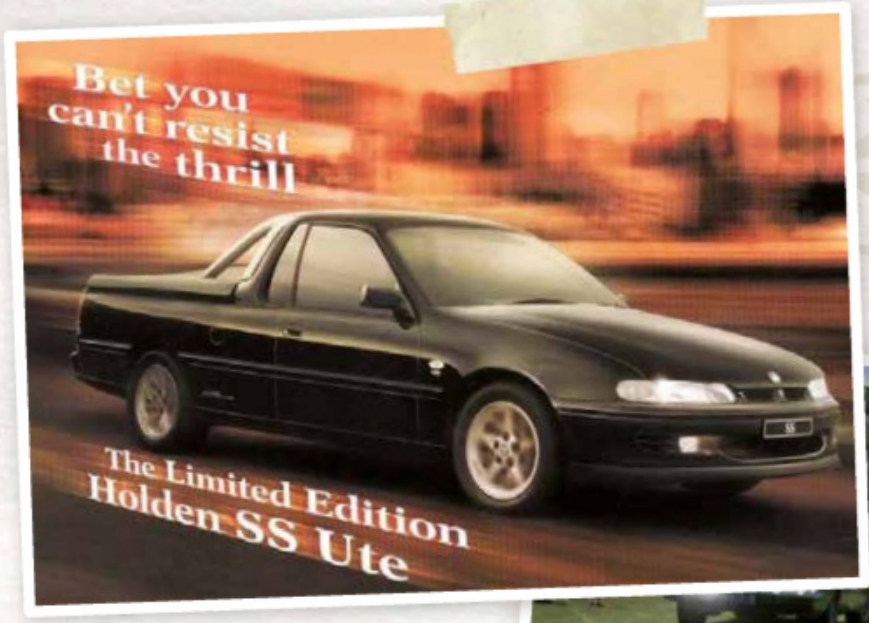
Cars optioned with a factory-fitted sunroof had their units installed by Holden By Design. Being a car-spotting nerd, I got really excited when a pre-production WH Caprice shell was wheeled through on a trolley for the sunroof team to work out how to install the mechanism and where to run the drain pipes.

Installing the sunroof involved removing the headlining, cutting the hole, fixing the unit in place and then making a new headlining. I never had to glue the actual sunroof unit in place; that was a stressful job as it had to be perfectly aligned in about 20 seconds before the adhesive set.

I did trim up and install the new headlining though, and was supposed to cover the sunroof hole first. I may have forgotten that step one particular day when I sent a jet of hot, pink glue flying out of the aperture and onto the bonnet of the brand-new Berlina I was working on. Fearing repercussions, I told no one, but the boss wasn't an idiot. And that's why I didn't work there for long.

I worked out some time later that I am better at writing about cars than building them, but I'm glad for the experience. It was a one-off.

WHENEVER I SEE A RARE VSIII SS UTE, I GET A BIT EXCITED; I MAY HAVE BONKED THAT CAR WITH A MALLET



ABOVE: Before Dave became a *Street Machine* scribe, he spent a short time at Holden By Design, working his magic on future classics like the VSIII SS ute

RIGHT: Dave also worked preparing export cars for duty overseas. Pictured is a Saudi police car

Andrew 'Gumpy' Willoughby

FINAL ASSEMBLY OPERATOR - HOLDEN VEHICLE OPERATIONS, ELIZABETH

I WAS 18 years old when I started at Elizabeth in May 1995. I was on the main line doing 'doors on' in Final Assembly, and during my time with the factory, I never moved too far from that area. I worked with a great group of guys, so I didn't really want to leave.

I enjoyed building V6 and V8 Holdens all day, although we would regularly get weird stuff come down the line. The Opel Calais went to Malaysia and Singapore, and ran a Commodore body, 2.5-litre Opel V6 and a Caprice bonnet and grille. The grille bracket was a bit fiddly to fit, with three nuts either side that had to be quickly tightened by rattle gun. That was fine when Statesman/Caprices were coming down the line every 10 cars or so, but these export Calais were built in batches during Saturday overtime shifts only. When 50 or so came down the line at once, little extras like that suddenly made things complicated.

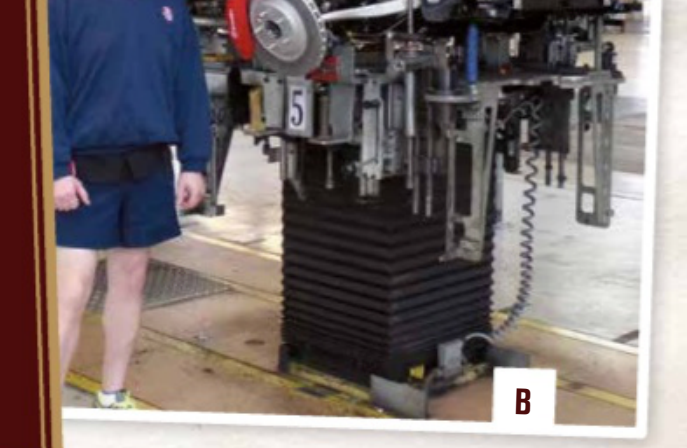
During the VT-VZ era, we were building Chev Luminas for South Africa and left-hook Chev Omegas for Brazil. The UK got the Vauxhall Monaro VXR and China got the Buick Royaum, which was a WL Caprice. When the next model, the WM, came out, we sent a bunch to South Korea as the W200 (aka Daewoo Veritas). The Koreans really busted our balls on features; the W200 had massaging rear seats, an air purifier and automated privacy blinds on the side and rear windows. They wanted crazy fit and finish as well, with absolutely perfect gaps all 'round. The entire car was an absolute pain in the arse!

The Caprice PPV was another special one. The shifter was almost in the dash and they ran a foot-operated park brake. It's weird now when I watch an American cop show and an Aussie Caprice appears. I always think to myself: "Wow, we built that."

Speaking of which, I never thought I'd own a V8 muscle car, let alone help build it, but when they announced the shutdown, I just had to have one. I bought a Spitfire Green VFII SS-V Redline and, thanks to the flexibility shown by my boss, was able to follow it down the line myself. I'm not only grateful to him, but to the team leaders and group leaders that all took a part in looking after my car. I've got hundreds of photos of it being built and watched the moment where the powertrain was married to the body. It was a unique experience.

A while after they announced the shutdown, I remember they had one of those imported Commodores on the lawn outside the canteen and told us all to check it out. Do you know what everybody said? "Who cares? We're not building it."

GM should never have called that car the Commodore; that was its first mistake. The second was keeping the Holden name alive. GM should have taken the opportunity to rebrand when the factory was shut down. That's why Holden's suffering such poor sales now; the imported stuff was always secondary to the bread-and-butter. Holden was about cars built in Australia, for Australians. Without that, what is it?



LEFT: Holden was riding high during the VT-VZ era, exporting beauties like the Vauxhall Monaro VXR to Old Blighty

A: After 22 years, this is what it came down to: Gumpy doing his thing on the hallowed 'last car'. Despite doing the job thousands of times before, there was a degree of nervousness. "Thankfully I didn't screw anything up!" he laughs

B: Who can say that they've seen their car's entire powertrain before it's been installed? Many Holden workers who bought cars after the shutdown was announced took a special interest in the creation of their vehicles. After all, they were not going to get the opportunity again

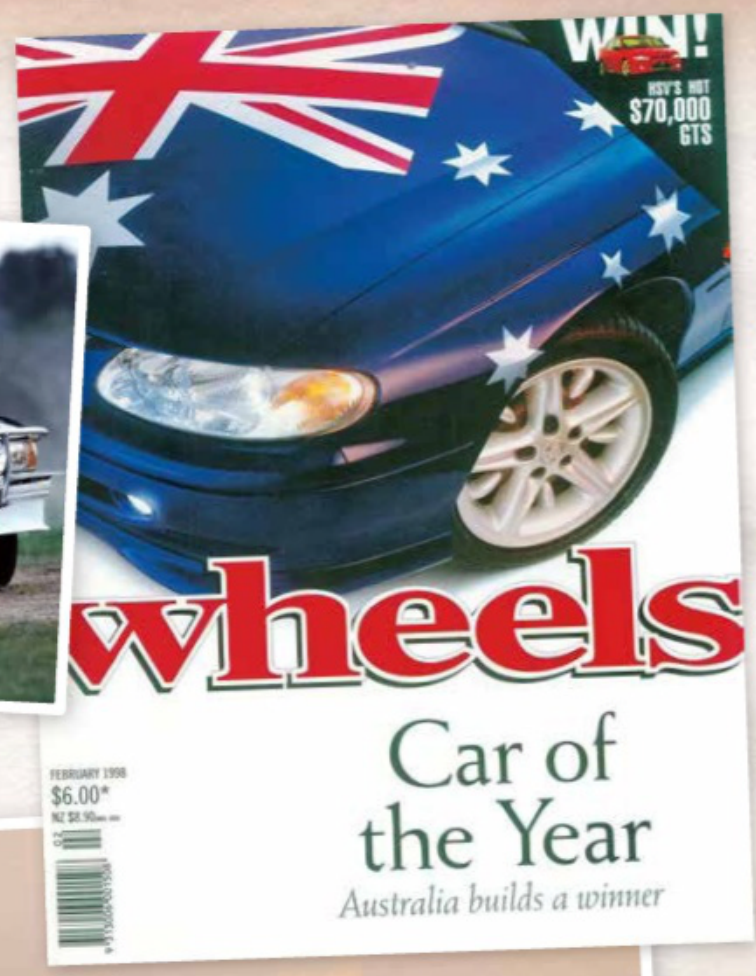
IT'S WEIRD NOW WHEN I WATCH AN AMERICAN COP SHOW AND AN AUSSIE CAPRICE APPEARS. I ALWAYS THINK TO MYSELF: "WOW, WE BUILT THAT"

Andrew 'Gumpy' Willoughby was not only lucky enough to buy a late VFII Commodore SS-V, but was also afforded the time to follow the car down the line himself, taking hundreds of pics of the gestation of his vehicle

A

IN 1969, I BECAME HEAD OF THE TORANA STUDIO, PENNING THE GTR-X CONCEPT AND OVERSEEING ALL MODELS FROM THE LC TO THE UC OF 1978

B



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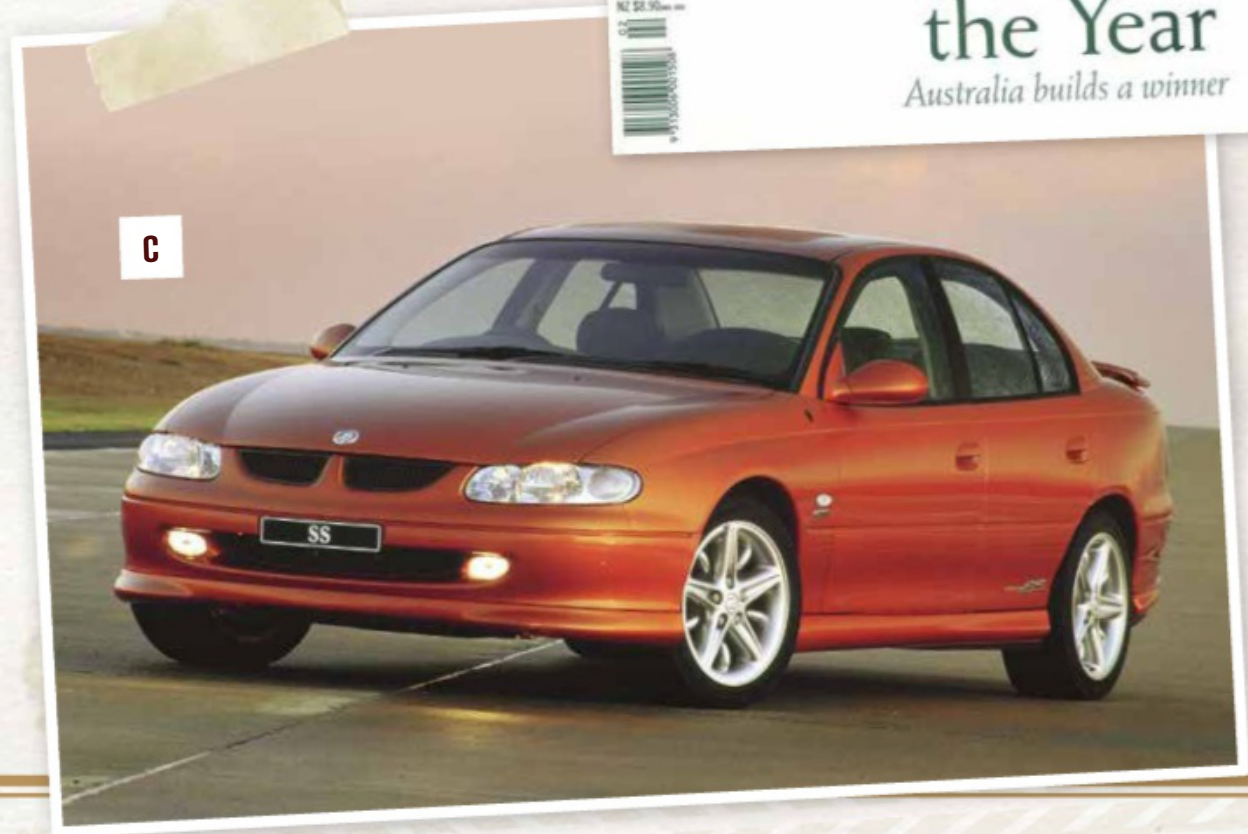
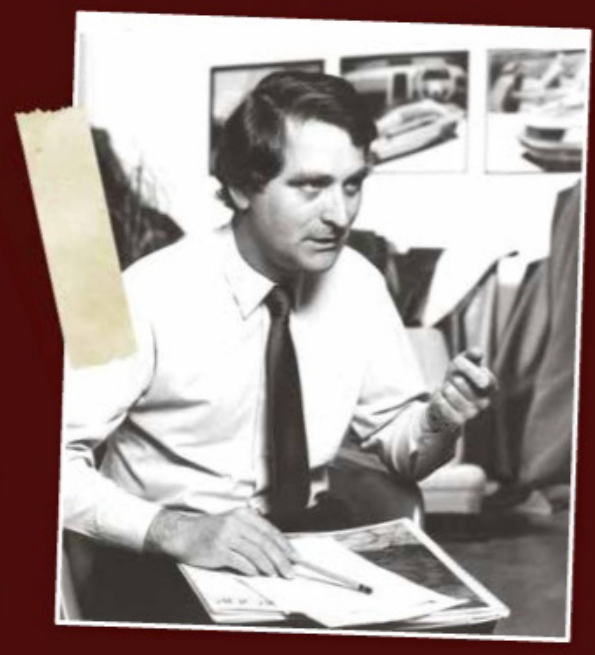


A: The GTR-X concept was the Torana-based sports car that almost made it to production, with a fibreglass body and GTR XU-1 running gear

B: Phil also designed the horn Opel Ascona B 400 rally car. It featured bonnet windsplitters that were later pinched for VH HDT Commodores

C: The mighty VT Commodore is Phil's personal favourite and a very successful car in its own right, winning *Wheels* Car of the Year for 1997 and spawning a bewildering array of variants throughout the shape's ultimate lifetime from VT through to VZ – including the Monaro, Crewman, One Tonner and AWD models. The VT alone sold up a storm, with a total of 303,895 units sold, including over 33,000 exports

Phil Zmood



DIRECTOR OF DESIGN - HOLDEN DESIGN, PORT MELBOURNE

I STARTED with Holden in March 1965 as a graduate designer from RMIT; in fact, I was the first design graduate Holden ever hired. In 1969, I became head of the Torana studio, penning the GTR-X concept and overseeing all models from the LC to the UC of 1978.

When looking back at the decision to base the Kingswood replacement on the German Opel, you need to engage a degree of perspective. The VB, with its tall glasshouse, was leading-edge in terms of styling and came with a bunch of new technology packaged within. Plus, it was rightly perceived to be European, which was highly desirable at the time; there was also a pretty major fuel crisis underway and it was seen as a benefit that the Commodore was smaller. Of course, we still fitted them with Aussie engines, so they didn't really use that much less fuel.

Initially it was quite a success, but then the Falcon started outselling us. The Commodore just didn't have enough room inside. When I was appointed Holden's first Australian Director of Design in 1983, the company was in pretty bad shape, with GM giving us two years to improve or we were closing.

We decided we had to do something immediately about the upcoming VL. Outside, we made it look wider, while inside we crafted out as much space as we could within the confines of the body. We also used interior trim colours and fabrics that made the car feel more spacious than it was.

The next-generation VN was also to be based on an Opel, this time the Senator. I went to Germany a couple of times and got some changes made to suit our requirements, but our car needed significantly more width than the Germans were willing to concede. We required Kingswood-sized dimensions to match or better the Falcon, so we cut it down the middle.

Mike Simcoe did a great job helping me design the VN's uniquely Australian interior, and all up it looked pretty good.

We only had about 30 people on our team by then, less than half of what we had in the early 1980s, but the guys were fantastic and put in a lot of extra hours. History shows that the company managed to turn it around and get back into profit, with the VN going a long way to helping. We were very proud of that car.

As fond as I am of the VN, my personal favourite was the VT. It fits the same mould as the HQ, which was the first car I had a really big say on. If you compare their designs, they're both 'soft' cars, and I feel both are ageless.

These days I drive an Opel Insignia. It's a cool-looking car, and while the ZB Commodore looked decent enough itself, it didn't have enough presence. The grille should have been stronger. It didn't make people say: "That's a Holden!"

Should they have called it Commodore? I don't think it would have made any difference. If it was a fine car, representing good value, it should have sold. Commodores were always about value for money. The ZB reduced the Commodore to being just another car in the crowded medium segment, and buyers couldn't seem to find enough compelling reasons to choose it over a rival.

Shane Dale

GROUP LEADER, MATERIAL FLOW - HOLDEN VEHICLE OPERATIONS, ELIZABETH

AT THE start of the VT era, things were booming, so I got a job on the production line in Section 510. The painted body would buzz around above you, then a big crane would drop the body down onto a trolley, which then ran along the production line. There was a chain under the line with hooks every seven or eight metres that would snag the next car and pull it along.

We handled a few tasks there. The first was fitting the gas struts to the bootlid. The reason it was done so early in the process was to ensure the lid wouldn't crack people on the head when they were fiddling around in there. On the second station, we took the doors off and put them on another conveyer belt, and then they'd choof off somewhere else to get assembled.

I also installed the wiring loom. The exposed spot welds on the body and the little clips and catches on the loom were all pretty bloody sharp, so the door lacing would go on at that point. This protected the rest of the guys further up the line, but I'd end up with little shards of metal in weird places; some would be Heron White, some would be Sting Red.

By the time I finished up at Holden several years later, I'd progressed to a supervisor's job with about 60 or so under me, managing absenteeism, employee issues, and health-and-safety stuff across several warehouses.

It was a great place to work in the early days; Holden was really quite good with employee gifts. If you rocked up to work for two months straight, you'd get a $50 Harris Scarfe voucher. I bought my house around that time and my entire kitchen was stocked with stuff from Harris Scarfe! When I didn't have a sick day for two years, I was given a nice embroidered Holden jacket. I remember thinking: "You're paying me to show up; you don't have to give me stuff as well." Upon the release of the V2 Monaro, everyone got a 1:18 scale model – black with a red interior – that was exclusive to employees.

It's a strange feeling knowing you had a hand in building so many cars you still see on our roads. Even going to a wrecking yard and spotting an old VT, you immediately remember that you were the one that pushed in those clips or provided those parts.

They offered a few rounds of redundancy packages and I left in 2016; I didn't wait for the end. The camaraderie had dried up a bit and it just wasn't the same. Before I left, though, I got the opportunity to have my 502ci-powered Sandman photographed at the end of the production line. One of these photos was also blown up as a huge, block-mounted poster and hung in the factory along with pics of other workers' cars. When they shut down, a mate got in touch and managed to score it for me. It's one of those keepsakes that's never going to happen again.

BEFORE I LEFT, I GOT THE OPPORTUNITY TO HAVE MY 502CI-POWERED SANDMAN PHOTOGRAPHED AT THE END OF THE PRODUCTION LINE

This memento, given to all staff employed when the shutdown was announced, includes a conrod and piston from the last batch made at Fishermans Bend and a red centre cap normally fitted to a Reserve Edition Commodore

"During the alignment testing process, we used solid-billet machined panels. These couldn't move, so we could ensure the gaps were perfectly true," Shane says. "The door is just the start of the stuff we did, but I had to get into a senior position before I got to see any of it"

LOUIS CORDONY

DYLAN CAMPBELL

EMMA NOTARFRANCESCO

DANIEL GARDNER

ANDY ENRIGHT

ELISE ELLIOTT

PETER ELLIOTT

DAVID BONNICI

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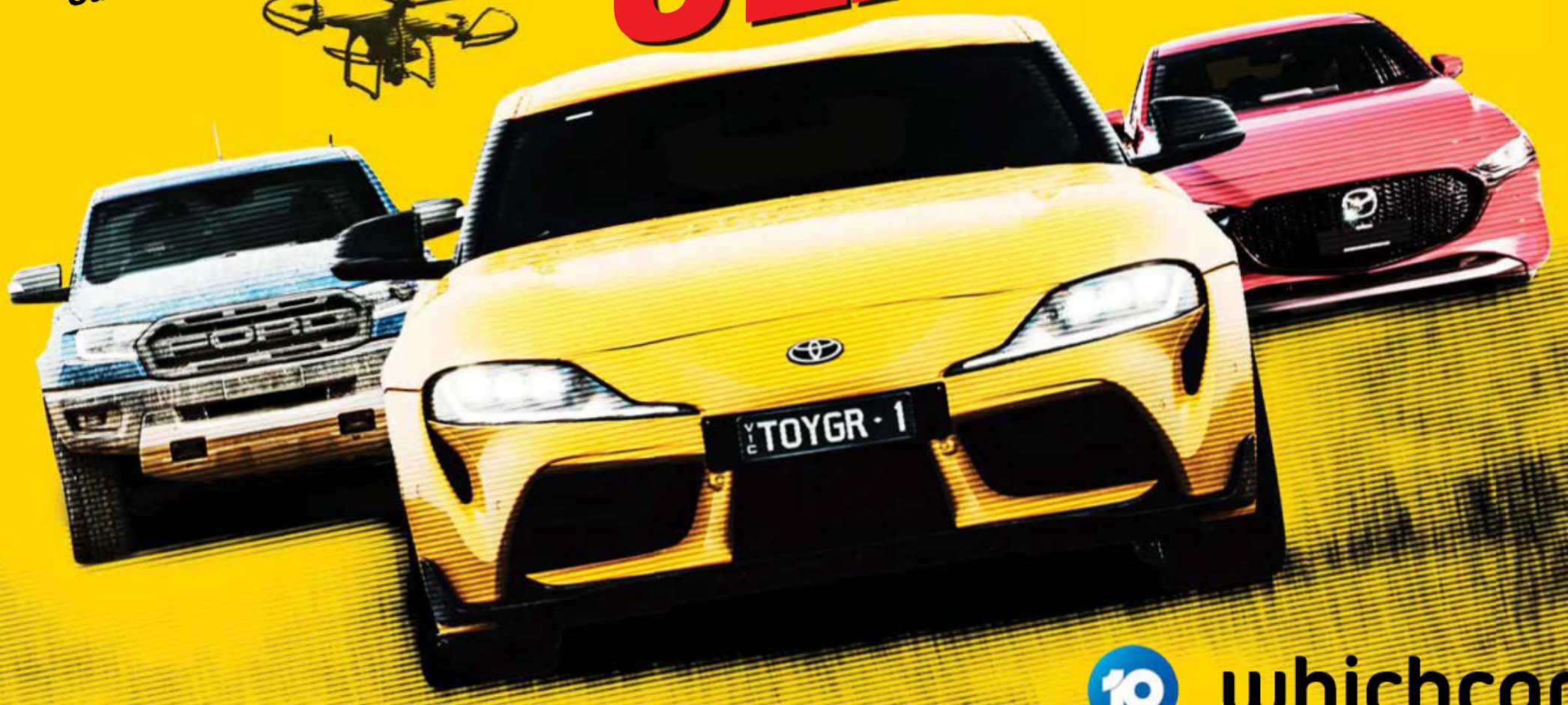

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FEATURING wheels MOTOR 4X4 AUSTRALIA UNIQUECARS STREET MACHINE

STORY IAIN KELLY PHOTOS BEN HOSKING

ALL THE RAGE

WHEN LIFE GIVES YOU LEMONS, FORGET THE LEMONADE – KEEP BUILDING RIDICULOUSLY TOUGH CARS!

A custom South Coast Radiator and 16in Spal electric fan keeps the big-inch iron LS cool, while MSD coil packs and 10mm leads ignite the fire. Brendyn spent plenty of time smoothing the engine bay before it was colour-matched to the shell

"I initially bought an 8.3L Whipple supercharger and we tried tuning it on the VL, but it didn't work on an engine under 500ci," laughs Brendyn. "I had it under-driven 70 per cent and couldn't keep fuel up to it, plus the pipes were too small. That blower will go on a big-block HQ sedan I'm building now"

K-Sport coil-over struts handle suspension duties up front, matched to the company's huge eight-pot disc brakes, while six-pot K-Sport rears live out the back. A custom four-link rear end and Strange coil-overs replace the stock trailing arms, allowing room for the 20x12in Intro KWC billet wheels

SLICK paint over an arrow-straight body, fat deep-dish wheels, a blown V8 screaming up front and show-quality trim. Brendyn Wardell has used this recipe on a slew of Commodore builds, and who can blame him when the results are as beaut as some of his greatest hits, including STR8AZ (*SM*, Jul ’03), 2ANGRY (*SM*, Mar ’13), ANGRYR (*SM*, Apr ’14) and now his new VL; 2NGRY2.

You may have noticed a bit of a theme with the number plates on these cars all sporting a fair amount of anger, and wonder how a bloke could possibly be enraged when he owns and builds such killer streeters. Well, it goes all the way back to 2003, when some lowlife flops decided they needed Brendyn’s amazing, groundbreaking blown VK.

“All these cars and ‘Angry’ plates link directly back to my VK Commodore, STR8AZ,” Brendyn explains. “I might have never built a VL if the VK didn’t get ripped off after going to the drags one Wednesday night. Back then, we couldn’t get insurance on those sorts of cars as they were just too illegal, so having some thieves take your car tends to stay with you.”

A positive bloke at heart, Brendyn bounced back from that disaster with a killer tubbed and blown VL Walkinshaw tribute dubbed 2ANGRY. Originally finished in black like the VK, Brendyn debuted it as a bronze monster at Summernats 26 and blew the minds of punters all over Australia. What happened next is the stuff of legend – or horror movies if you’re a Commodore fan.

On his way back into Summernats, the pristine VL was rear-ended by an SUV at an estimated 70km/h, folding it in half and destroying 2ANGRY before it ever got a chance at the glory it deserved. About now you could forgive Brendyn for thinking he couldn’t win a free kick in a pub fight, but he got back on the horse the next year by re-shelling 2ANGRY’s drivetrain and suspension into a blue VL Calais called ANGRYR, while he planned his next move.

“ANGRYR had everything from the smashed car, but this new car is a full fresh build,” says Brendyn.

ON HIS WAY BACK INTO SUMMERNATS, BRENDYN’S PRISTINE VL WAS REAR-ENDED BY AN SUV AT AN ESTIMATED 70KM/H, FOLDING IT IN HALF

I FOUND AN ORIGINAL NATURALLY ASPIRATED VL CALAIS IN PORT MACQUARIE FOR $1000 AND PICKED IT UP THE WEEK AFTER SUMMERNATS. THAT BECAME THIS CAR

DRIVELINE: Behind the stout LS is a 1500hp-rated TH400 built by Craig's Automatics with a transbrake and a custom TCE converter. The diff is also nuclear-grade. The sheet-metal 9in housing has a Strange 9.5 nodular iron centre, 35-spline billet axles and 3.5:1 gears to run sweet on the street

GAUGES: While the custom Auto Meter gauge installation looks like it was sheeted in by Brendyn, it actually retains the factory warning lights. "I gutted out a factory cluster to make the bezel, and the Auto Meter gauges fit around the factory warning lights in that cluster," he says

BOOT: The 421ci iron LS drinks E85 from a boot-mounted fuel cell packing a trio of Walbro 460L/hr pumps. The tank gets filled in the trimmed boot, as the factory filler has been shaved off the body

INTERIOR: Jeff's Custom Interiors redid the VL cabin with custom blood-red trim and matching carpet to strike a high contrast to the grey paint on the shell. "It is almost like a modern interpretation of the Silver Mink and burgundy trim you see on early Monaros," Brendyn says

“Right after 2ANGRY was smashed into, I found an original naturally aspirated VL Calais in Port Macquarie for $1000 and picked it up the week after Summernats, and that became this car. My mate Billy Shine and I worked every Wednesday night to finish building the car I never got to enjoy.”

Those who’ve followed Brendyn’s previous builds may note 2NGRY2 is chock-full of big-inch LS power, rather than the plastic motor that was between the strut towers of 2ANGRY.

“Holden engines aren’t in the same world as the LS,” Brendyn says. “The 308 is an old design, they’re heat-soakers, they have an old oil design, and the cost is too high. I priced a COME 383 and it was cheaper to build this LS – and the LS wasn’t going to have overheating issues.”

Starting with a late-model, six-litre iron LQ9 block, the boys added a Callies DragonSlayer crank, Callies Ultra H-beam rods and a custom set of forged 9.8:1-comp slugs, pushing the cubes up to 421ci. A 0.697in-lift, blower-spec Comp Cams hydraulic-roller bumpstick and LS7 lifters round out the serious hardware in the bottom end. Up top are a pair of CNC-ported square-port heads filled with PAC springs and stainless valves.

Of course, most of the attention goes to the Enderle EFI hat perched atop the BDS 8/71 blower and matching manifold, plumbed with 16 ID injectors – eight 1000cc and eight 2000cc – all smashing E85 into the LQ9.

“The engine was originally built for the 8/71 to make around 1000hp,” says Brendyn. “We couldn’t get more than 450rwkW *[603hp]* as it just spun on the rollers when we tried tuning it at Ultimate Performance. I’m a part-owner of the shop and we’re thinking of buying a hub dyno soon, so maybe we’ll see what it can make then.

“We’ve got a good computer with the Haltech Elite 2500, plus there are fuel injectors in the hat and manifold. While it is hard to split the fuel load in the tune, as the hats aren’t designed for pump fuel, the guys at Ultimate Performance got it sorted and it drives awesome.”

BRENDYN WARDELL 1986 HOLDEN VL CALAIS

Paint: Custom grey

ENGINE

Brand: GM LQ9
Capacity: 421ci
Induction: Enderle EFI bug-catcher, BDS manifold
Blower: BDS 8/71
ECU: Haltech Elite 2500
Heads: CNC-ported square-port
Camshaft: Comp Cams hydraulic
Conrods: Callies Ultra H-beam
Pistons: Custom forged 9.8:1
Crank: Callies DragonSlayer
Oil system: Melling high-volume, High Energy sump
Fuel system: Eight ID2000cc injectors and eight ID1000cc injectors; triple Walbro 460L/hr pumps
Cooling: South Coast Radiators, 16in Spal thermo fan
Exhaust: Custom twin 3in
Ignition: MSD coil packs, 10mm leads

TRANSMISSION

Gearbox: TH400, transbraked
Converter: Custom TCE
Diff: Sheet-metal 9in, 35-spline billet axles, nodular iron 9.5in Strange Engineering centre, 3.5:1 gears

SUSPENSION & BRAKES

Front: K-Sport adjustable coil-overs
Rear: Strange coil-overs, custom four-link
Brakes: K-Sport eight-piston discs (f), K-Sport six-piston discs (r)
Master cylinder: Standard

WHEELS & TYRES

Rims: Intro KWC billet; 20x8.5 (f), 20x12 (r)
Rubber: Lionhart; 225/30 (f), 305/30 (r)

THANKS

My wife Natalie; my good mate Billy Shine; Mark at PROcoat for powdercoating and his help; Mick, Josh, Brent, Adam and Marv from Ultimate Performance; JP Fabrications; K-Sport; Craig's Automatics; Jeff's Custom Interiors; Hoffy for the paintwork; Danny from KMC Performance; South Coast Radiators; Little Jamie for the buffing; Tumbi Auto Electrics; Coastwide Towing; anyone else I forgot to mention

Getting that engine into the car proved to be more complex than first anticipated, however. Brendyn lives on the sunny NSW Central Coast, a region rich with awesome roads to cruise, so he likes to clock plenty of street miles in his cars. This meant air conditioning and power steering were mandatory accessories in this particular VL.

"Getting the extractors to fit with the power steering and air conditioning was really difficult," Brendyn sighs. "I modified the chassis rails to fit air conditioning, and as I'm running four-into-one headers I had to remake seven out of eight primary pipes to fit both the power steering and air con. You can't get to the starter through the pipes, it is that tight in there, but we got it sorted in the end. If I want to take the 'box out I have to half-lift the engine out of the car to get the pipes off so I can undo the starter."

Another area of the car that tested Brendyn was getting the shell pin-straight and true, as his cars are known for awesome bodywork. "The body was a full bare-metal job, and it wasn't a straightforward job to make the Walky kit look right," he says. "They weren't a great fit from new, so we had to spend a lot of time to make it fit right. The colour I chose was a big hit on

2ANGRY, so I kept it the same, and with the red trim it all works together."

Thankfully 2NGRY2 survived both its debut at Summernats 32 and backed it up by making it through 'Nats 33 as well, though some pinched fuel pump wiring in the tank did prevent it from making the judging pavilion on time. "We had 2am nights for two weeks before Summernats 33," Brendyn says. "As soon as the engine would get under load it wasn't getting enough fuel, so it died before we could get it judged. As soon as we fixed it, it drove awesome and I've actually been driving it around a bit, taking it down to Terrigal and whatnot."

It's great to hear that Brendyn can finally enjoy his blown, tubbed Walkinshaw tribute – even if it took seven years longer than originally anticipated.

2NGRY2 IS CHOCK-FULL OF BIG-INCH LS POWER, RATHER THAN THE PLASTIC MOTOR THAT WAS BETWEEN THE STRUT TOWERS OF 2ANGRY

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STORY CARLY DALE
PHOTOS SIMON DAVIDSON

SHOW BOAT

LUCKY'S SPEED SHOP HAS TRANSFORMED DAN APPLEBY'S BOAT-TAIL BUICK RIVIERA INTO A SHOW-STOPPING CUSTOM

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NSW - TRADE

Subwoofers under the front seats

1

BODY-COLOURED CUSTOM AUTO METER GAUGES IN LUCKY'S-ALTERED BEZEL SEATS TO SUIT THE CURVED DASH

2

HAND-CRAFTED EPOXY RESIN KNOBS AND LEVERS FROM SILICONE CASTS

3

CUSTOM COLUMN SHIFT AND INDICATOR STALK TO SUIT STEERING WHEEL PROFILE

4

PEARLCRAFT 1960 OLDSMOBILE WHEEL WITH LUCKY'S-ADDED BODY COLOUR AND INSERTS

5

HIDDEN STEREO, BLUETOOTH, CHILD-SEAT ANCHORS, AIRBAG CONTROLS AND A/C CONTROLS

6

HAND-FORMED STEEL DASH, REFINED WITH AMPLIFIED CURVES

Seats custom-built from Honda frames, trimmed in tan vinyl

Perforated rooflining with hidden LEDs to create a star-like effect

LAND-yacht. Barge. Boat. All cheeky nicknames for gigantic 70s-built American cars, predominantly from the GM stable. Not content with sheer size, manufacturers at the time also added unusual body styling to the mix, with Buick's early-70s boat-tail design perhaps the most distinctive.

And it's this pointy-ended feature that lured in Dan and Monika Appleby while they were on the hunt for a tidy weekend cruiser. Monika was keen on a muscle car, while Dan preferred a custom, and the locally sourced, big block-powered 1972 Buick Riviera coupe they found neatly ticked both boxes.

As the Rivi arrived in project form, it toured the local shops for paint, panel, airbags, diff and donk before returning home for assembly. "That's when I discovered the limitations of my tools and abilities," Dan shrugs.

After spying an article on Ben Erdahl and Lucky's Speed Shop within this very magazine, Dan was amped to get the Lucky's team on the project. A deal was struck, and with it came a complete rethink of the Buick's direction.

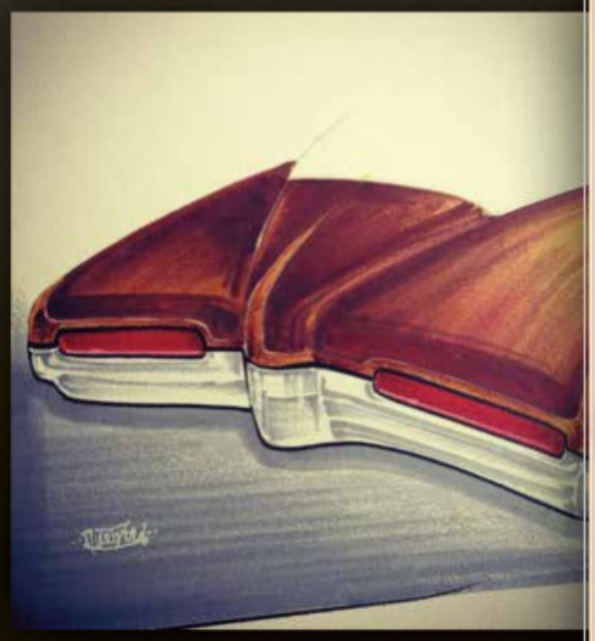
"Ben had me focus on the vision, on what I wanted to achieve," Dan says. "I started to build a tidy and mildly customised cruiser, yet deep down I wanted something more complete – a full custom with handcrafted workmanship. My vision was for a European-styled American grand tourer, which meant that almost everything had to be redone."

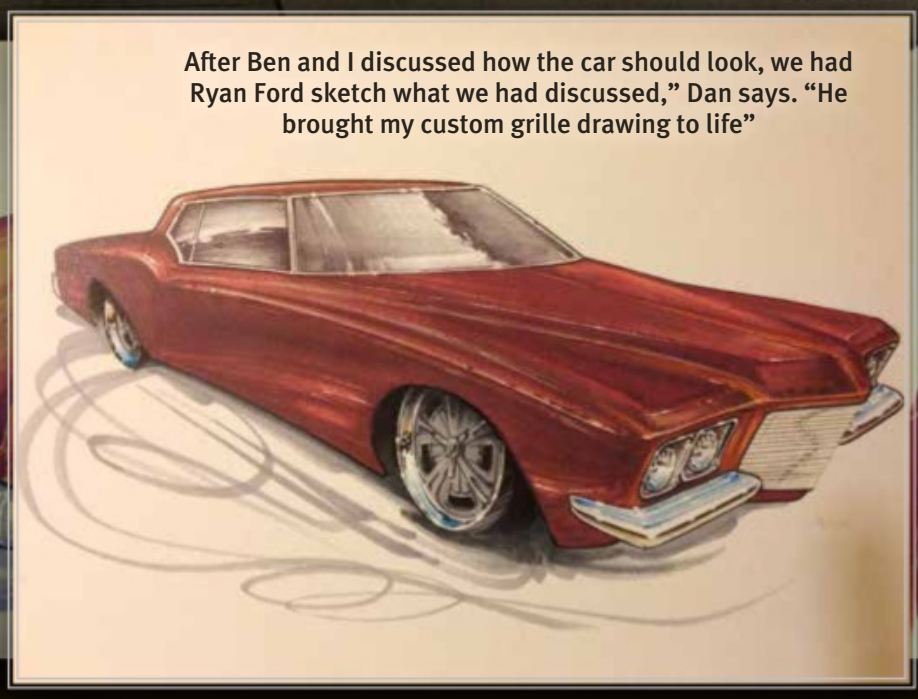
It might seem like an extreme measure, but you can't obtain perfection by making compromises. "I have learnt the difference between a good enough job and a great job," Dan says. "Virtually nothing is off-the-shelf – Lucky's made the car, and it shows, as the attention to those details is phenomenal. Everything down to the fasteners and brackets has been hand-made or modified."

This build is certainly cohesive, with a sharply defined theme and high-end finishes. Working from initial design renderings by artist Ryan Ford, Ben and his team at Lucky's stripped the mammoth Buick back to bare metal to ensure quality from top to tail. With body filler removed and rust repaired, every panel was reworked for perfectly gapped fitment and a smooth flow. The bumpers have been modified to tuck into the body and flow neatly into the body contours, while the front bar has been further customised to work around the re-styled grille, and is bookended by a pair of bumperettes. The grille itself is now a customised, slatted arrangement relieved of the bulky surround.

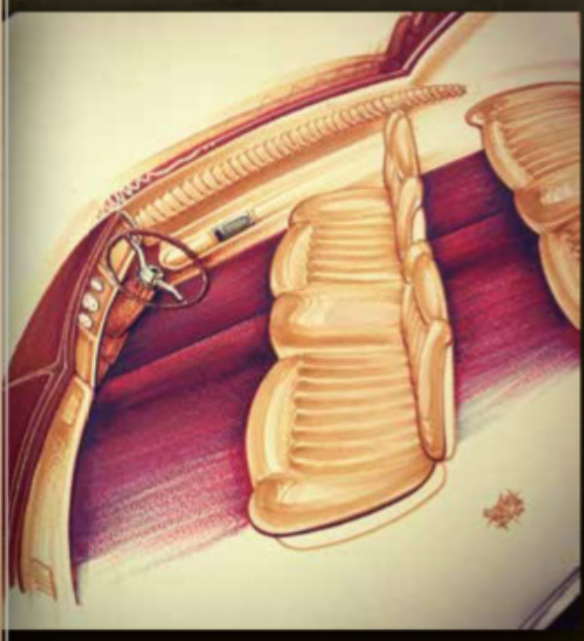
This level of craftsmanship has been applied to every other facet of the build, including the desired hue. Flowing over the refined panelwork is Maserati's PPG Bordeaux Pontevecchio, topped with Paint Huffer Micro Rootbeer metalflake candy scallops.

I WANTED A FULL CUSTOM WITH HANDCRAFTED WORKMANSHIP. MY VISION WAS FOR A EUROPEAN-STYLED AMERICAN GRAND TOURER





After Ben and I discussed how the car should look, we had Ryan Ford sketch what we had discussed," Dan says. "He brought my custom grille drawing to life"



Custom-made, polished, hollowed stainless-steel grille with individually machined faces to match the front profile

Hundreds of hours in paint sanding to create tight lines with a silky finish

Handcrafted tail-light bezels with layered Perspex lenses

Modified front bumper, including neatly crafted bumperettes

Air Ride airbags on all four corners

Scratch-made stainless-steel window surrounds, bonnet trailing edge and interior garnish moulds

Tucked and gapped rear bumper, narrowed at all three peaks

THE ATTENTION TO DETAIL IS PHENOMENAL. EVERYTHING DOWN TO THE FASTENERS AND BRACKETS HAS BEEN HAND-MADE OR MODIFIED

Tthe cabin is the size of a small loungeroom, yet inspiration was drawn from something much smaller. “The interior is modelled from a 50s Ferrari GT,” Dan says. Brent Parker and Raymond Mifsud of Ray’s Trimming were tasked with the massive job, and knocked it out of the park. Tan vinyl covers the door trims, perforated rooflining and hand-crafted seats, which are based on Honda frames. Other features such as bespoke levers and knobs complement the now more curvaceous and refined hand-crafted dash.

Motivating the land yacht is 464 cubes of Buick iron thanks to Nas at Nas Automotive & Thornleigh Cylinder Heads. An Edelbrock 750cfm carb feeds an Edelbrock B-4B manifold. Heads are heavily worked Buick stage one items, and packed with all of the good gear. They boogie thanks to a Schneider Racing cam, while below are SRP forged slugs, on stock rods and crank. Nas reckons the mill is good for around 500hp at the fly.

Once the engine was slid into the bay, Lucky’s whipped up a bunch of custom brackets, linkages and shrouds, before finishing off the entire under-bonnet area to match the rest of the build’s superior quality.

Certainly, Dan and Monika’s faith in a trusted shop has paid dividends in the final product. “Working with Ben is like collaborating with an accomplished artist,” Dan enthuses. “I could tell him what I had in mind and he’d make it work into the overall theme of the car.”

These efforts have garnered the car some prestigious awards since its completion. At its MotorEx 2019 debut, the newly christened ‘Riverboat Gambler’ took home the Top Custom Pinnacle Award and the first Mario Colalillo Memorial Award. “It was a huge honour to receive the Mario trophy,” Dan says. “People in the crowd flocked to the car, and the judges were very complimentary. The whole experience was fantastic.”

More recently, the Buick has taken awards at Summernats 33 and the Victorian Hot Rod Show. In May, the Rivi will be headed to the peak custom event, Nostalgia Lane.

When all is said and done though, this Buick was always going to be a cruiser. “The car is fully engineered,” Dan grins. “As we drive by, people step onto the road to look at it and ask questions. It literally stops the traffic.”

DAN APPLEBY
1972 BUICK RIVIERA
Paint: PPG Bordeaux Pontevecchio & Paint Huffer Micro Rootbeer

ENGINE
Brand: 464ci big-block
Carb: Edelbrock 750cfm
Manifold: Edelbrock B-4B
Heads: Buick stage one, worked
Cam: Schneider Racing
Pistons: SRP forged
Crank: Stock
Oil pump: TA Performance high-performance
Fuel system: Mallory electric pump, PULP
Cooling: AFCO radiator, TA Performance water pump, custom clutch fan
Exhaust: TA Performance headers, custom twin 3in exhaust with Flowmaster mufflers by Lucky's Speed Shop
Ignition: ICE distributor, coil and leads
Power: 500hp (approx)

DRIVELINE
Trans: TH400
Converter: 2500rpm
Diff: Buick, LSD

SUSPENSION & BRAKES
Front: QA1 shocks, Air Ride airbags, custom control arms
Rear: QA1 shocks, Air Ride airbags, triangulated three-link, custom control arms
Steering: GM-style Ididit column, right-hand drive
Brakes: Wilwood discs (f & r)

WHEELS & TYRES
Rims: American Racing Salt Flats 18x8 (f & r)
Rubber: Diamond Back Redline (f & r)

THANKS
Ben Erdahl and the team at Lucky's Speed Shop; Sam Lisle; Ryan Ford; Vince and his family at Straightline Paint & Panel for the first paintjob; Judith Neilson for the use of Dangrove Art Storage Facility as a shoot location; Smith Concepts; Ray's Trimming; Lifestyle Concepts; Mitch Williams

ENGINE: Here's 464 cubes of torquey Buick goodness all wrapped up in a glossy custom bay. Nothing has escaped the Lucky's detail train, from the metalflaked donk and dress-up parts through to custom-built tweaks such as the hand-crafted alloy fan shroud and neat bracketry

BOOT: Hand-crafted panels tuck away the battery, fuse box, air tank and compressor, and most of the Lifestyle Concepts stereo goodies. The head unit remains visible, topped with 'Riverboat Gambler' badging

BOOTLID: The Riverboat Gambler moniker has been perfectly pinstriped on the bootlid. "We combined the Riviera and boat-tail names into one: Riverboat," Dan explains. "Then I conjured up an image of *Maverick* and the old-time gamblers on those boats," Dan says. "The car is different – a bit of a maverick – so the name stuck!"

WESTERN

PRO WEST
HIGH PERFORMANCE
84
NASTYQEE

FIRST AID DEMONSTRATIONS
85

STORY BORIS VISKOVIC
PHOTOS JORDAN LEIST & BV

PERTH'S MOTORVATION MAY NOT BE AS BIG AS IT USED TO BE, BUT THERE WAS STILL PLENTY OF TOUGH CARS AND COOL RIDES TO CHECK OUT

STARS

1

2

AFTER the near-apocalyptic conditions in Canberra during *Street Machine* Summernats, it was nice to return to the clear blue skies and relatively mild temperatures of Perth for Motorvation 34 – the longest-running event of its type in Australia. Yep, it's been going a full year longer than Summernats, but unfortunately has been in a holding pattern over the past few years.

For a long time, Motorvation was a three-day extravaganza that attracted rave reviews from interstate visitors and locals alike. Things changed in 2016, when the long-term management team of Perth Motorplex – led by the Miocevich family and Kevin Prendergast – called it a day.

Since then, the Motorplex has been run by VenuesWest, a government statutory authority that reports to the State Minister for Sport & Recreation. VenuesWest pulled Motorvation back to a one-day event while the government sought a new operator or even buyer for the venue. Four years later, the search continues, and Motorvation has remained a one-day deal for now.

Nevertheless, I was impressed with the quality and quantity of cars in the staging lanes, and it was great to see the likes of Gareth Lougher's HR and Kevin Mantach's amazing '50 Chev coupe back after their successes at Summernats. This year around 250 cars were entered, a far cry from the 900-plus entrants they had a few years ago, but that's not necessarily a bad thing. I remember being at those events and there were a lot of complaints about the quality of cars, as well as the number of late-model, near-stock vehicles entered; some people even called it 'Commo-vation'. The other downside of those earlier

MOTORVATION IS THE LONGEST-RUNNING EVENT OF ITS TYPE IN AUSTRALIA; IT'S BEEN GOING A FULL YEAR LONGER THAN SUMMERNATS

1: Jack Alfirevich took on the Sportsman burnouts in his AU Falcon, AUGASM, and put on a class-winning skid. He then put a fresh set of tyres on and handed the car over to his mate Tristhan Powers, who went out to make it a 1-2 for AUGASM

2: John Royce doesn't look or sound like your typical lowrider owner; he's a lot paler and sounds distinctly like someone from the UK. He's spent over $45,000 on engraving for his otherwise restored '64 Impala, which is named 'Catherine' in honour of his late mother

3: It was great to see Chris Bitmead's '32 Ford coupe out and about, and in the sun the pearl yellow paint looked absolutely stunning. We had the Hemi-powered beast on the cover of *SM Hot Rod* in 2006

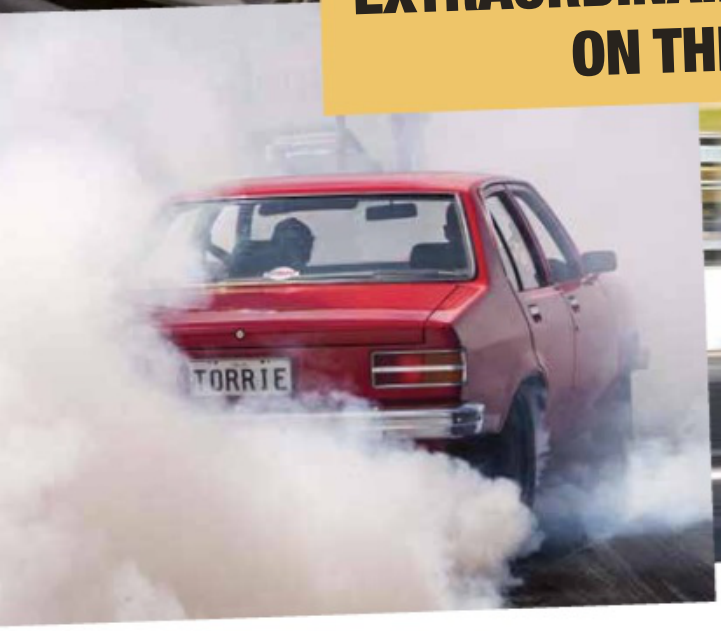
4: Andrew Demier dubbed his '74 RX-3 T3RROR, and he's dead right; this thing will be a terrifying sight once he unleashes those 978hp onto the skinny little ET Streets. There's a race-spec triple-rotor 20B from Green Brothers with a 72mm Borg Warner turbo bolted to it, and the car should be capable of high 7sec passes

5: Tom Peters is not a small man, but he does have a very small Morris Ten – so small he has to sit in the back seat to drive it, though that's probably partly due to the LS1 he's stuffed up front

6: Grant Barnes's DERANGED One Tonner must have been one of the loudest cars at the event, which really should be no surprise looking at the exhaust – or lack thereof!

1

IT WAS GREAT TO SEE SKID VIDEOGRAPHER EXTRAORDINAIRE PETER 'FLINTY' FLINT OUT ON THE PAD IN HIS XC UTE



2

events was the traffic jams caused during the cruising sessions. I distinctly remember both lanes of the drag strip jammed full of cars, many of them overheating.

One of the people involved back then was this year's Best Street Machine winner and Grand Champ, Gareth Lougher. "For Motorvation 30 we had a committee doing car selections," he recalls. "We capped the entries at 650, which we achieved, with 65 in the Elite tent and 585 in the paddock." That was a highly successful event, but it took a lot of work from a lot of volunteers, and it's hard to keep that momentum going – especially when you don't get any recognition or thanks at the end of it all.

One trend that I think was abundantly clear from Summernats was that people are building Elite-level cars that are much more useable and driveable, and there's nothing better than seeing a top-level car cruising the track or competing in driving events. But with just one day of Motorvation to fit everything in, it makes it very difficult to schedule enough cruising events to keep the regular entrants interested while still allowing enough time for the burnout competition. What got left out of the mix this year was the driving event for the Elite cars. Even Gareth admits he had mixed feelings about taking out the top award this year with so few cars competing in the Elite show and no driving events.

Maybe one solution could be to take the event back to a full weekend – the entrants-only Friday night is a great idea that's been in place for a few years now – but instead of having the Elite show over the full weekend, keep that for the Saturday and leave Sunday for driving events. In the past, those events were held on the speedway infield, but that would understandably keep away some of the more nicely detailed cars; maybe they could all be run on tarmac? Just throwing some ideas around.

3

4

GRAND CHAMPION
Gareth Lougher – HR Holden sedan

BEST STREET MACHINE
Gareth Lougher – HR Holden sedan

BEST STREET ROD
Bam-Bam Martin – 1934 Ford coupe

BEST COMPETITION/EXHIBITION
Kevin Mantach – 1950 Chev coupe

BEST DISPLAY
West Coast Lowriders

[BURNOUT RESULTS]

PRO
1st: Jake Myers – S1CKO
Runner-Up: Mick Hamon – WIDE OPEN
Runner-Up: Brett Pearson – VYNOT

OPEN
1st: Ryan Newton – N3WTS
2nd: Shane Gardiner – HELLBOUND
3rd: Jason Tanian – KENOATH

SPORTSMAN
1st: Jack Alfirevich – AUGASM
2nd: Tristhan Powers – AUGASM
3rd: Daniel West – LIMIT3R

1: Ron Tate's custom pink Torana has an LS2 with LS3 heads and a Magnuson blower, punches out 540hp at the tyres and is good for 10.50 quarters. Inside there are cut-down VX HSV seats that have full electric adjustment

2: Zac Meares was having a great time cutting laps in Paul Ward's Zodiac. The Windsor-powered Mk3 runs the quarter-mile in the low-12sec range, so it's a fun little ride

3: Glen Taylor's BARK is a crowd favourite, but couldn't make the burnout comp because he rattled some flexplate bolts loose during some exuberant, ahem, cruising

4: After a quick chat with owner Deerk Van Der Kooi, the DUTCHN plates on his killer XE Fairmont Ghia ESP started to make sense. It's had some power upgrades, packing a 400ci Clevor based on a Dart Iron Eagle block with CHI 3V heads and a 1050 QFT carb, good for 577hp at the tyres!

5: Another classic hot rod from Perth is Mark Allen's '41 Willys coupe, which we featured in the March '02 issue of *SM*. The tough pro streeter still looks killer after more than 20 years on the road

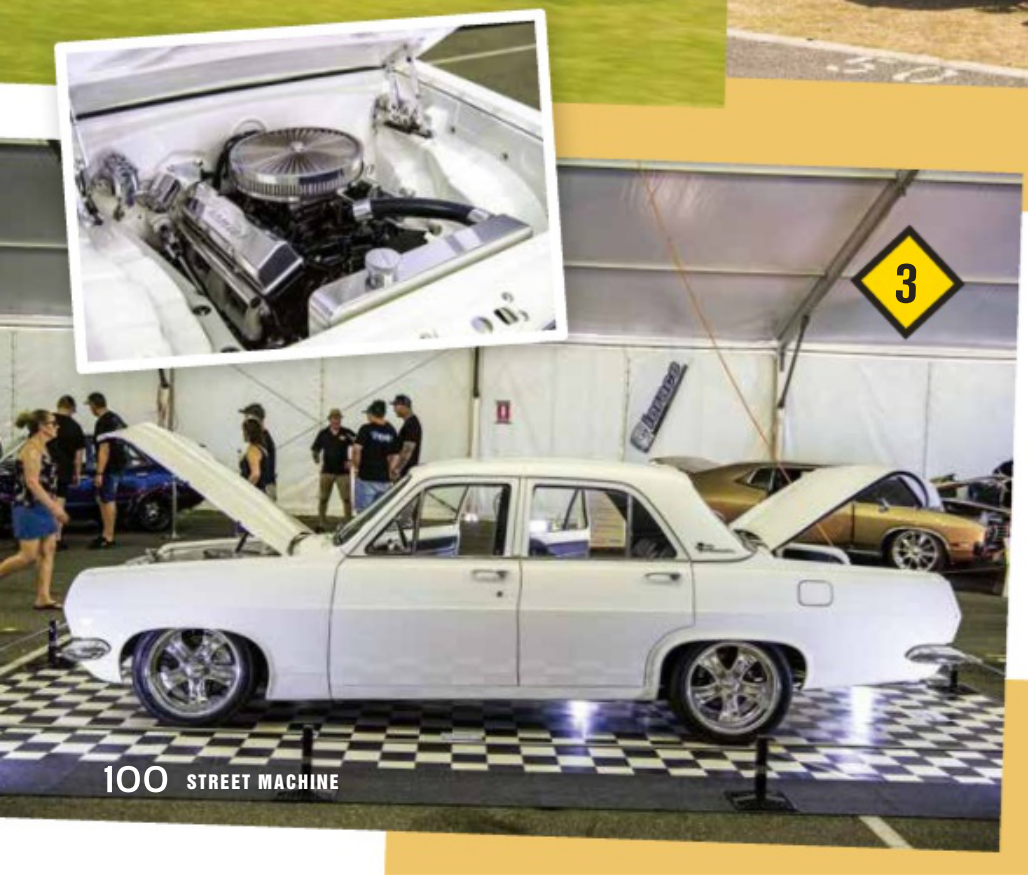
6: If there was an award for best use of Silver Frost spray paint, it would surely go to Mathew George-Kennedy and his EF Falcon, SHATT3RD; I'm pretty sure you could see the engine bay on this thing from space. He was having a great time smashing tyres and cruising the event

WHILE 250 CARS MIGHT NOT SEEM LIKE A LOT, THE MAJORITY OF THEM WERE STEEL-BUMPER CLASSICS

Unfortunately, due to the bushfires there weren't as many of the east-coast heavy hitters as usual on the burnout pad, but there was plenty of local stuff that was just as impressive. It was great to see skid videographer extraordinaire Peter 'Flinty' Flint out on the pad in his XC ute instead of behind the camera, and he had a plan to smash at least three sets of tyres, which I'm pretty sure he achieved.

There was one interloper that came across the Nullarbor and managed to snatch first prize in the Pro class, but he's practically an adopted son of Western Australia, having been here countless times. Of course, I'm speaking of Jake Myers in the S1CKO Mustang, who came out early for a performance that everyone afterwards was chasing. Mick Hamon in WIDE OPEN came within one point of Jake, with Brett Pearson in VYNOT just a few points behind.

While 250 cars might not seem like a lot, the majority of them were steel-bumper classics, and the quality was really high. There was a lot of stuff I hadn't seen before, plenty of cars with at least 500hp at the tyres, and everyone in the pits seemed to be having a great time. Like everything in this world, if you want it to last, you need to nurture it and support it. Long live Motorvation!



1: Ryan Newton went on to win the Open class in the burnouts, as well as the prize for best tip-in. Here he is putting N3WTS through its paces during a powerskid

2: Bill Liddiard's hot rod pick-up is a cool bit of gear. The '37 Ford cab has been heavily channelled over the original chassis, which now has a 289 Windsor stuffed between the rails

3: After a successful trip to Summernats 33, where he made the Top 60 and took home People's Choice, Gareth Lougher's HR took home all of the tinware in the Street Machine class at Motorvation, as well as the Grand Champion award

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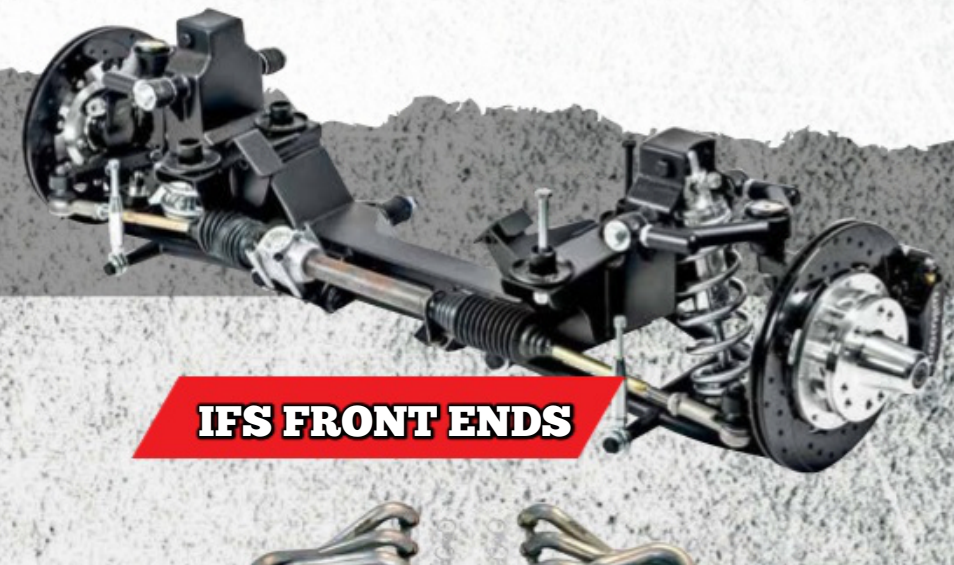

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Double TROUBLE

JOEL SMITH NEEDED A FAMILY CAR TO CRUISE WHILE HE FINISHED HIS ELITE-LEVEL MUSTANG, SO HE BUILT AN XC HARDTOP AT THE SAME TIME

STORY TAS McMILLAN PHOTOS CHRIS THOROGOOD

YOU know when your project car's in the shed with its major organs scattered around the place and all you want to do is just take it for a spin? Joel Smith spent so many years in this very situation with his '67 Mustang that he built an XC hardtop in just a few months to scratch the cruising itch.

Joel's no stranger to crafting cars; he even runs his own business, Joel's Garage Gear, which sells hoists and workshop equipment. "When I was 20 I built an XF with a turbo 250 crossflow, and later I had a 60-series Land Cruiser with a 350 Chev in it," he says.

With those cars out of the picture, Joel stumbled across the 'Stang while trawling eBay for two-door Falcons. "It only had a few hours left, so I stupidly bought it sight-unseen and shipped it over from Adelaide," he says. "The first time I drove it down our driveway the power steering shat itself. I turned it around and put it back in the shed, and didn't drive it again for 12 years!"

In the time-honoured tradition of project cars the world over, once Joel started fixing things he found a lot more than he bargained for. Soon the '67 was completely disassembled to reveal a shell with more holes than a colander. "I should have thrown it straight in the bin, but I didn't want the money I already had in it to go to waste," he says. "All the metal on the outside of the car got replaced – the only original panels are the roof and the tops of the quarters."

While he was repairing the floor, firewall and radiator support, Joel mini-tubbed the rear, relocated the leaf springs inboard of the rails, replaced the boot floor with flat sheet, added chassis connectors and swapped the entire front suspension for a weld-in coil-over package with rack-and-pinion steering.

"Everything I fabricated for the car got done three times," Joel sighs. This wasn't for want of skill, as Joel is pretty handy on the tools, but due to his desire for better results. For instance, Joel built extractors to suit a WRX steering rack, but he couldn't fit the power steering lines without raising the engine. Then Flaming River began offering a right-hand-drive rack to suit the combination, but the input shaft interfered with the extractors and Joel was forced to make new ones. Even the bonnet was replaced three times before it satisfied both Joel and the engineer.

Under that bonnet sits far more engine than the Mustang left the factory with. The Dart-blocked Windsor weighs in at a hefty 447ci, with a pair of AFR 225cc heads topping the cylinders and a Holley HP 850 carb delivering go-juice through an Edelbrock RPM Air-Gap. A Comp cam shouts orders through Comp lifters and roller rockers, while down the bottom a Melling pump sucks lubricant out of a modified Canton sump. A manualised C10 from DTM Automatics and an Aikman Engineering fabricated nine-inch put the engine's healthy 591hp and 598lb-ft to the pavement.

Darren Thomson was called in to take care of the bodywork, and finally the car was whisked off to Premium Paint Works to have the gorgeous PPG orange candy paint slathered on. Unfortunately, while the panel and paint came out looking

THE '67 WAS COMPLETELY DISASSEMBLED TO REVEAL A SHELL WITH MORE HOLES THAN A COLANDER

Joel replaced the Mustang's original front suspension with a fabricated coil-over front end, and decided to convert it to right-hand drive at the same time. After having issues with racks, headers and even the dash not fitting correctly, he settled on the final set-up of Flaming River adjustable column and rack, aftermarket dash frame and plastics, and the third version of the driver's-side header

The XC's body is all stock bar the blacked-out trim details. "The Falcon coupes look so tough that you don't need to touch them," says Joel. Behind the 17x5 Weld S71s on the front, there's a pair of Stubtech 2in drop spindles supporting AU II twin-piston calipers for much-improved ride, handling and braking

Joel decided to retain the cart-spring rear end over fitting a four-link, but moved the springs to the inside of the chassis rails to make room for the 17x10 Billet Specialties rims and Kumho rubber. The diff is a fabricated 9in from Aikman Engineering, with floating hubs and a Detroit Truetrac centre. Joel plans to add Air Ride airbags for some height control, as driving the 'Stang over uneven surfaces is pretty nerve-wracking

1: Joel took care of all the engine bay fabrication himself, including the flat firewall, shock tower removal, custom four-into-ones and the panels covering the gap between the radiator support and the Scott Drake billet grille. The trick billet hinges are Ringbrothers items, while Race Coatings ceramic-coated the entire exhaust system

2: While the off-the-shelf interior kit was designed to fit a '67 Mustang coupe, Richard Schembri at Instyle Custom Trim had to modify and even remake some parts so they would fit correctly. Richard also built the custom centre console – which houses the B&M shifter and a pair of speakers – and the super-tidy custom boot installation. Engine vitals are monitored on Speedhut gauges, and the speedo operates on a GPS signal

JOEL SMITH
1967 FORD MUSTANG
Paint: PPG Candy Orange

ENGINE
Brand: Dart Windsor
Capacity: 447ci
Carb: Holley HP 850
Intake: Edelbrock RPM Air-Gap
Heads: AFR 225cc
Camshaft: Comp
Conrods: Lunati
Pistons: SRP forged
Crank: Scat
Fuel pump: Edelbrock mechanical
Exhaust: Custom 1⅞in headers, twin 3in system
Ignition: MSD Pro Billet and 6AL
Sump: Canton
Cooling: Race Radiators custom, twin SPAL fans

TRANSMISSION
Gearbox: Manualised Ford C10
Converter: Dominator 3500rpm stall
Diff: Sheet-metal 9in, 3.5:1 gears, Truetrac centre

SUSPENSION & BRAKES
Front suspension: Aldan American coil-overs
Rear suspension: Pedders shocks, reset leaf springs
Steering: Flaming River rack-and-pinion
Brakes: Wilwood (f & r)

WHEELS & TYRES
Rims: Billet Specialties; 17x6 (f), 17x10 (r)
Rubber: Pirelli P Zero; 205/45 (f) 285/45 (r)

JOEL SMITH
1978 XC HARDTOP
Paint: DeBeer Yellow

ENGINE
Brand: Cleveland
Capacity: 383ci
Induction: Holley Sniper XFlow EFI
Manifold: CHI 3V
Heads: CHI 3V
Camshaft: Crane
Springs: Comp
Rockers: Yella Terra Platinum
Pistons: Speed Pro
Conrods: Scat
Crank: Scat
Sump: ASR
Exhaust: Pacemaker extractors, twin 3in to 2.5in
Ignition: MSD
Cooling: Standard-size radiator, AU thermos

TRANSMISSION
Gearbox: Ford C4, manualised
Converter: TCE 3700rpm
Diff: Ford 9in, 3.7:1 gears, Truetrac centre

SUSPENSION & BRAKES
Front suspension: Pedders springs and shocks
Rear suspension: Pedders shocks, reset leaf springs
Spindles: Stubtech
Brakes: AU Falcon (f), Wilwood (r)

WHEELS & TYRES
Rims: Weld S71; 17x5 (f), 15x10 (r)
Rubber: Mickey Thompson Sportsman SR; 26x6 (f), 28x12 (r)

1

1: While the Mustang's engine bay has been carefully crafted for cleanliness, the XC's is practically stock-standard – Joel didn't even weld up any holes! The 383 Clevo is no slouch, with 540hp and 500lb-ft at the crank, but has seen its share of dramas: "I didn't realise the cam was new when I bought the motor, so I destroyed it just before Christmas 2018," says Joel. "I was refitting the motor on New Year's Eve, but we made it to the 'Nats!"

2: You can't go wrong with classic black vinyl in a 70s muscle car, so Richard from Instyle Custom Trim was called on again to make it happen. The door trims are from Pro Stitch and the dash was refurbished by Plastic Repair Surgeons. There's a RetroSound head unit in this car too, along with Rockford Fosgate speakers front and rear – this is the family car, after all!

2

Mickey Mouse, reassembling the 'Stang wasn't exactly a snack. "A lot of reproduction stuff just didn't fit," says Joel. "But I got it back together, engineered and registered just in time for MotorEx 2019."

Let's take a step back a few years and have a yack about the bright yellow XC coupe you've no doubt noticed on the pages before you. "My brother owned the coupe for 20 years," says Joel. "I remember the day he brought it home; I was 16. It was originally a six, but he bought it with a 351 that he blew up at some point, and we swapped a 302 into it. He took it off the road in 2016 for a resto, but it ended up on a rotisserie in the corner of my shed for 18 months. When he moved even further away, I said: 'It's about time you sold me that car.' The Mustang isn't really a family car, so that's what the coupe is for."

Joel couldn't bring himself to do a half-arsed job of the resto though, so Darren Thomson was again charged with cleaning up the coupe's bodywork and drenching it in that bright DeBeer yellow. Joel's mate Shannon offered him a 383ci Clevo that was gathering dust in his shed, and DTM supplied a manualised C4 to back it up. Inside, Joel couldn't bear to keep the interior XC-spec brown, so Instyle Custom Trim replaced everything with far more suitable muscle-car black vinyl. After a mere 10 months of late nights, the XC was ready to hit the streets!

Joel's hard work has already earned him some accolades, with the Mustang awarded a place in the Top 60 at Summernats 33 and the XC taking home a Street finalist spot at Summernats 32 and Best XA-XC Hardtop at the Geelong All Ford Day in 2018. "Our newborn was only six weeks old when I took the Mustang to Summernats," says Joel. "My wife Emina said: 'Make sure you bring something home.' So I took home the Top 60 trophy!"

THE MUSTANG ISN'T REALLY A FAMILY CAR, SO THAT'S WHAT THE COUPE IS FOR

THANKS

My wife Emina for putting up with me building two cars at once; Darren Thomson Restorations for the panelwork on both cars and the paint on the XC; Premium Paint Works for the killer paint on the Mustang; Mick and John at Race Parts Melbourne; Shannon Reeves and Bertuna Engines for building both engines; all the customers of Joel's Garage Gear that helped make this possible

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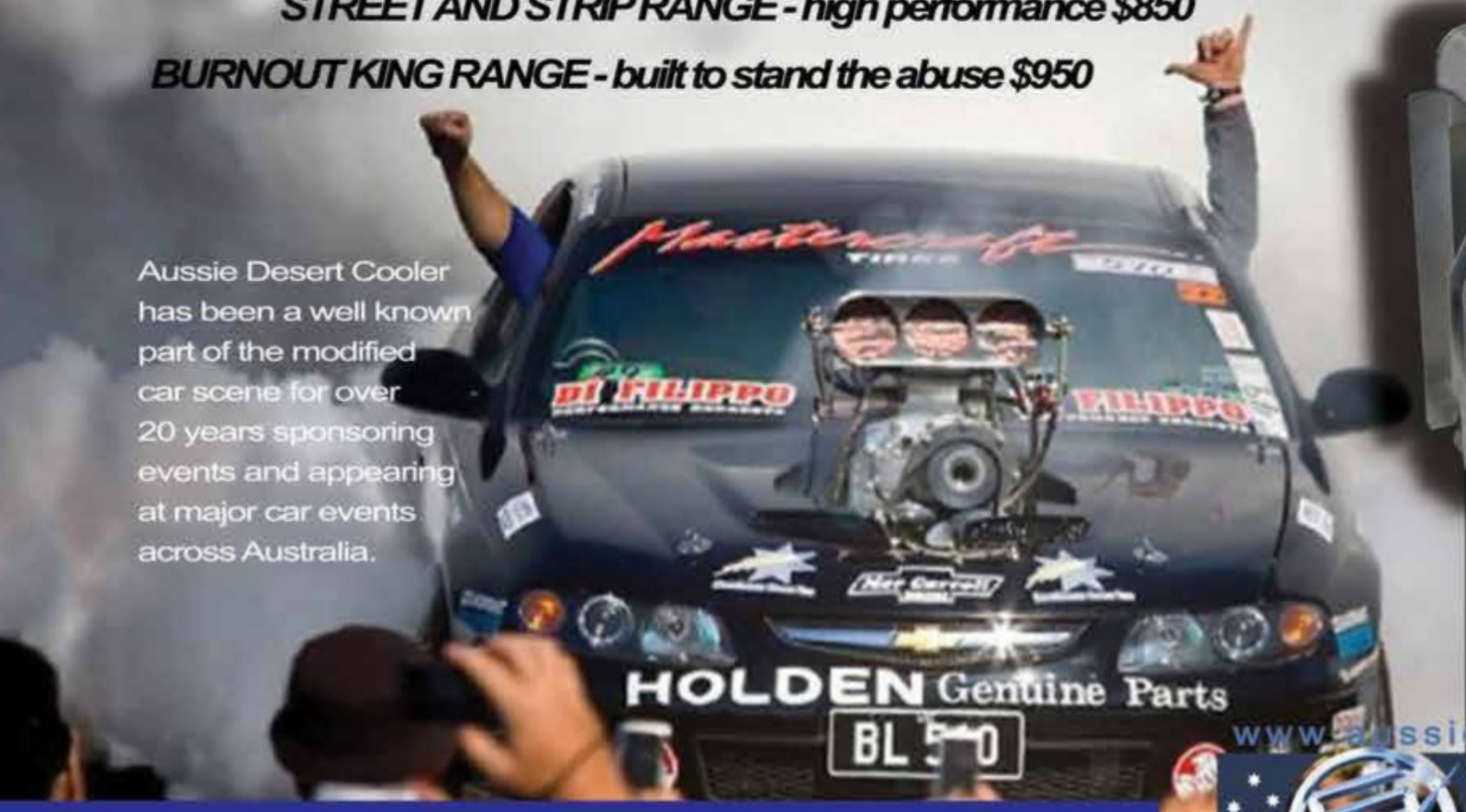

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GRUNT HUNT

STORY BORIS VISKOVIC **PHOTOS** ALASTAIR RITCHIE

TICKLED PINK

> WANT TO KNOW HOW TO MAKE OVER 400HP AT THE TYRES WITH A NATURALLY ASPIRATED HOLDEN SIX?

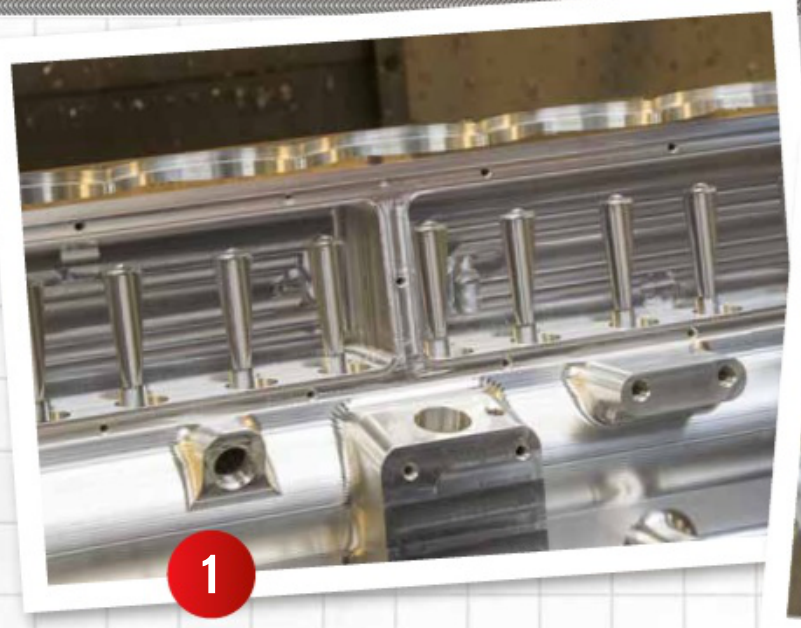
PAUL Burnet is a Kiwi racer with a career in touring cars that goes back to the early 70s. In conjunction with Phil Pagan at Track Sport Engines and Craig Hyland from Engine Dynamics, he's been developing a billet 202 block for a number of years.

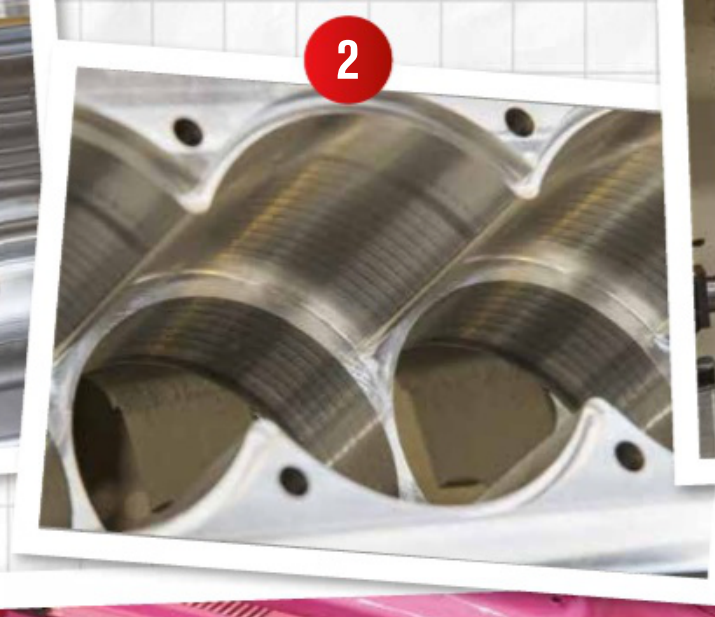
That development is now complete, and the block – topped with a J.ZED head – is now in Paul's LJ Torana GTR XU-1 race car. The new combination has punched out 422hp to the rear tyres naturally aspirated, which is pretty impressive from a six-pot. The most power they could reliably produce with an OEM block was 390hp – at the crank – so this is a serious step up.

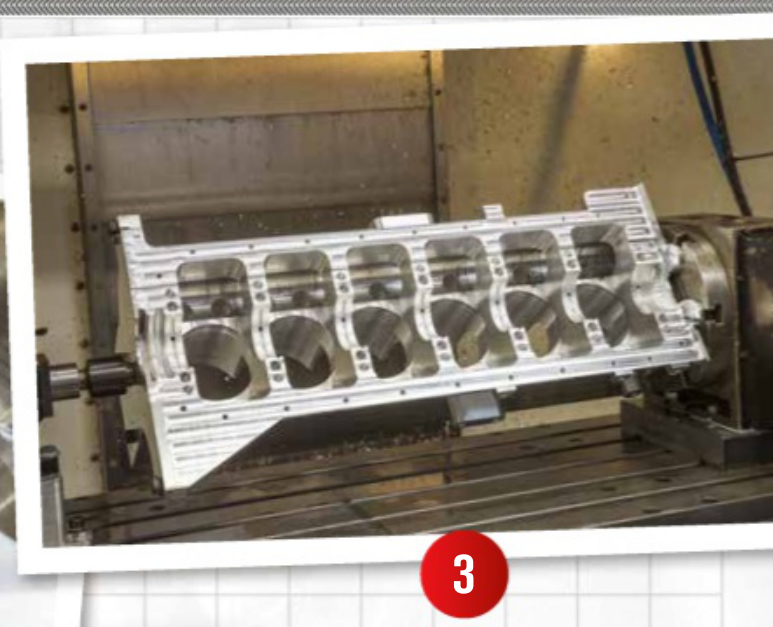
Paul races his Torry in the Northern Muscle Cars Club series. The club was formed to organise races for pre-'83 muscle cars, and what's nice to see is that they're not a bunch of historians, so the rules are a little looser than the historic touring car classes, but not quite as free as the Touring Car Masters.

"We built the new car in 2007 and took it to Muscle Car Masters with a cast-iron head, and it went quite well," Paul says. "Then we went again in 2009 with the J.ZED head on it, but when we got it back home and out of the container we noticed it had split the bore. We sleeved that block, but we were still having problems blowing head gaskets, even though the compression wasn't that high.

"We then had Cometic make some head gaskets for us – at considerable cost – and put an electric water pump on the motor," Paul continues. "That sort of solved the problems, but we were still having some water leakage issues, just not to the same extent. We were racing eight or nine times a season and racing it reasonably hard, but there was a lot of maintenance. After a while, Phil said: 'Why don't we make a block?' He had worked on some billet blocks before in jet sprint boats and said we could probably get one made."







The top of the intake plenum is actually mesh. It was never designed to be like that, but the motor never ran right with a solid top, which they believe was due to the air being pressurised and the Webers not liking it

1 The block features standard locations for the oil pump, engine mount and fuel pump

2 The block has been machined to accept Darton sleeves

3 Later versions of the block may not have four bolts on the front and rear main caps, nor four-bolt mains on all seven bearings, as this requires a custom sump

Of course, the people running Chevs and Fords have got race blocks they can buy, but if you're running a Holden six you don't have that luxury. So really, this was the obvious path to take.

The first version of the block wasn't very successful and basically had to go in the bin, but version 2.0 had a lot more time spent on computer-modelling the design, thanks to the expertise of Alex Lean. The main problem they had to overcome was the cylinder liner design. Due to the pushrod holes being very close to the bore on Holden sixes, the recommended dimensions for the liner saw the lip cutting into the pushrod hole, so Phil redesigned the liner so that the lip was much narrower.

You might think that one of the advantages of the billet block would be weight saving, but that wasn't really a consideration, as Northern Muscle Cars rules state that the competitor must add ballast above the front axle line equivalent to any engine weight difference. If anything, Paul should be allowed to take weight out of his car, as the completed billet block will probably end up slightly heavier than the original cast-iron version. "The liners are unbelievably heavy – 2kg each!" he says. "Plus, all of the bolts have to be longer with an aluminium block."

The general design specifications don't differ much from the factory block, with the only obvious differences being the four-bolt mains and strengthening ribs on the intake and exhaust side of the block. But this is by no means a bolt-in replacement for your regular Holden six. For a start, it has been specifically designed for the J.ZED head, and the use of an electric water pump means standard mounting points for bracketry and accessories aren't there.

The cooling system is also quite different to standard. "Because of the problems we had with block one, Phil decided not to run any water between the block and the head. The block's water is plumbed separately from the head," says Paul.

If the block was to become commercially

PAUL BURNET
LJ TORANA GTR XU-1
Paint: Strike Me Pink

DONK
Type: Custom billet Holden six
Capacity: 237ci
Inlet: J.ZED triple Weber
Carb: Triple 55mm Webers
Head: J.ZED 12-port
Valves: Victory titanium
Cam: Tighe roller; 260@.050 (in), 270@.050 (ex), 0.650in lift
Pistons: JE custom
Crank: Auscrank 3.450in stroke
Conrods: Carrillo custom
Radiator: PWR
Ignition: MSD

SHIFT
'Box: Tex Racing 101A four-speed
Clutch: Tilton twin-plate
Diff: BorgWarner full-floater

BENEATH
Springs: Eibach
Shocks: Penske
Steering: LH Torana power rack-and-pinion
Brakes: AP Racing four-spot (f), Wilwood four-spot (r)

ROLLING STOCK
Rims: Simmons B45; 15x8 (f), 15x8.5 (r)
Rubber: Hankook Z214 225/45/15 (f & r)

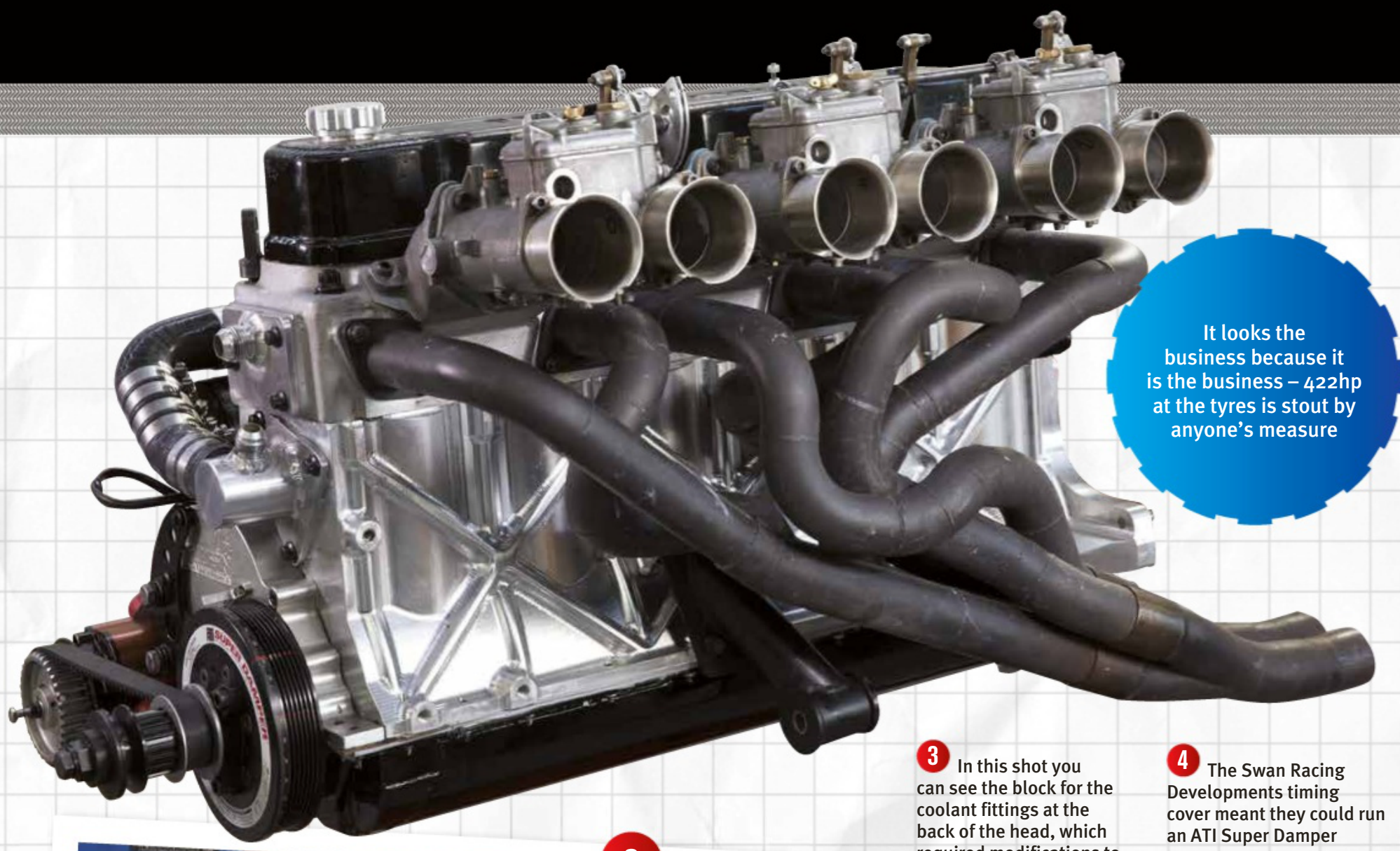
THANKS
Phil Pagan at Track Sport Engines, who built and maintains the car and the various engines it's had, and designed the billet block; Michael Bristow, who works for Phil and is an excellent test driver; Alex Lean of Devise for all the CAD/CAM work on the billet block; Craig Hyland at Engine Dynamics for the CNC machining of the block; Luke Dinsdale at Dinsdale Race Engineering for designing the suspension

There's a fair bit going on with the plumbing, with separate lines for the head and block. The whole lot is kept cool by a NASCAR-style radiator from PWR

1 The J.ZED head is a big part of how this motor makes so much power. It's had some extra fettling from standard

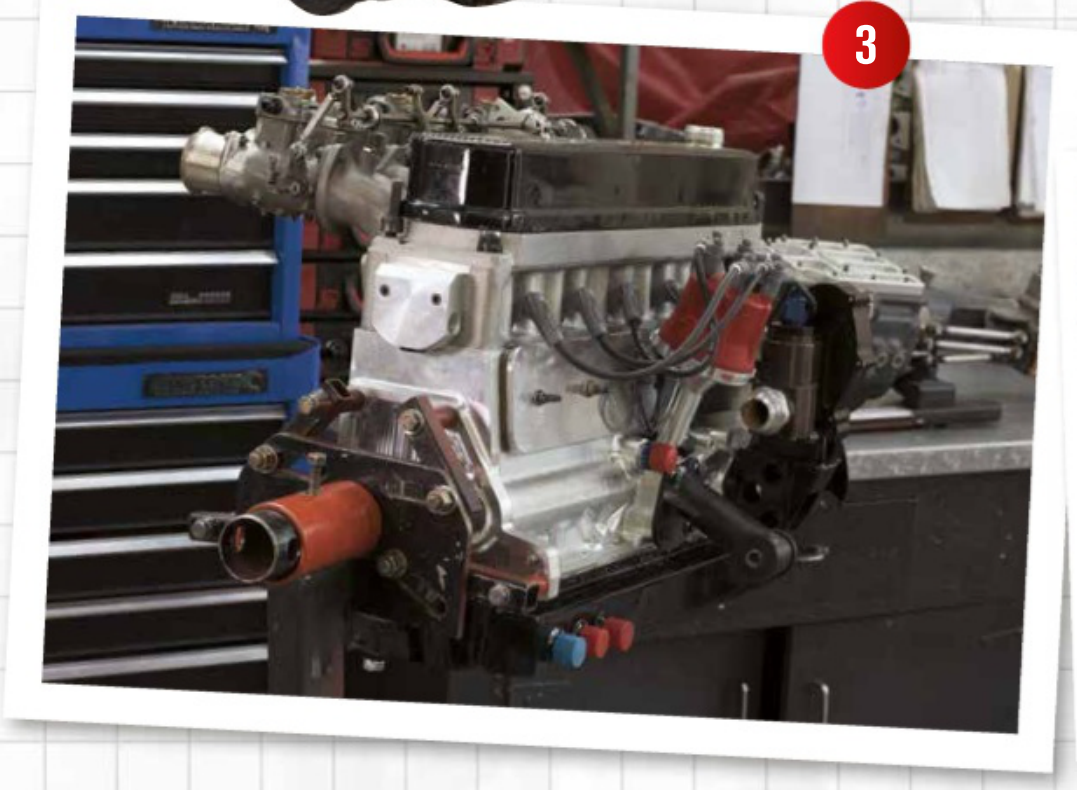
2 The electric water pump is a key part of the cooling system, according to Paul. There's not much room between the sleeves, and Paul doubts a mechanical pump would have the oomph to push the water around

Aside from the awesome triple 55mm Webers, the other cool thing in this shot is the strengthening ribs on the block. Form definitely follows function here



It looks the business because it is the business – 422hp at the tyres is stout by anyone's measure

3 In this shot you can see the block for the coolant fittings at the back of the head, which required modifications to the firewall to make fit



4 The Swan Racing Developments timing cover meant they could run an ATI Super Damper

available, that's something that would need to be addressed, as the current set-up means that the firewall needs to be modified so that coolant fittings can be run from the back of the head. There are not too many people that would be willing to cut up their car to that extent.

On the upside, the block is at least 50 per cent stronger than the OEM block, which would most definitely be useful for those wanting to run a boosted combination, even though it's no slouch with the aspirated combo – that's for sure!

"Out of the factory block we got about 390hp on the engine dyno. The billet-block engine made about 450, though we've got more out of it since then," Paul says. "Phil did a little bit of head work and raised the comp because he knew he was going to be able to keep the head on it." They're also allowed to run avgas, so that helps.

It's a pretty serious induction system though, with a trio of 55mm Webers! "As recommended by Joe Zullo *[Mr J.ZED himself]*," Paul explains. "We thought they'd be too big. We have run 50s on it when Phil dynoed it, and he said the 55s definitely went better, even though he shifted the jetting from one set of carbs to the other."

The engine also needs a larger set of headers, which is something they worked out on the flow bench, but these haven't been built yet because they wanted to get the car running sooner rather than later.

It's probably time to come clean about this mighty 202. Its capacity is in fact 237ci thanks to the 3.450in stroke on the Auscrank steel crank and hefty overbore, which by my calculations comes in at 200thou larger than stock at 3.825in. If you're into metric engine capacities, it's just shy of 3.9 litres. To complete the rotating assembly, there are custom Carrillo rods and JE pistons and a compression ratio around 11:1.

The J.ZED head is about as good as it gets for a Holden red. Based off the original design by Frank Duggan, it has been further developed by Zullo and has pushed his front-engined dragster to 7.70 ETs. The cast-alloy 12-port design features 1.925in intake and 1.500in exhaust valves, with longer valve stems to allow valve lift of more than 700thou! The most obvious difference with the J.ZED head is the raised and angled intake port location, so you won't be bolting your single-barrel Strommie onto it.

Of course, all of this work would have been pointless if it hadn't resulted in quicker lap times. "We've gained about three-quarters of a second – which is a lot – over a 1:13 lap time at Hampton Downs," says Paul. Mission accomplished, then!

FIT & FIDDLE

STORY & PHOTOS CHAD ATKINSON

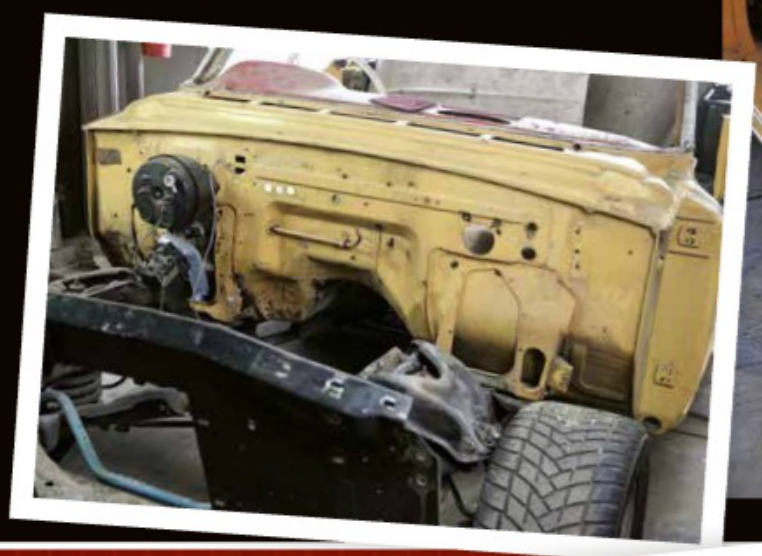
BUILD A WALL

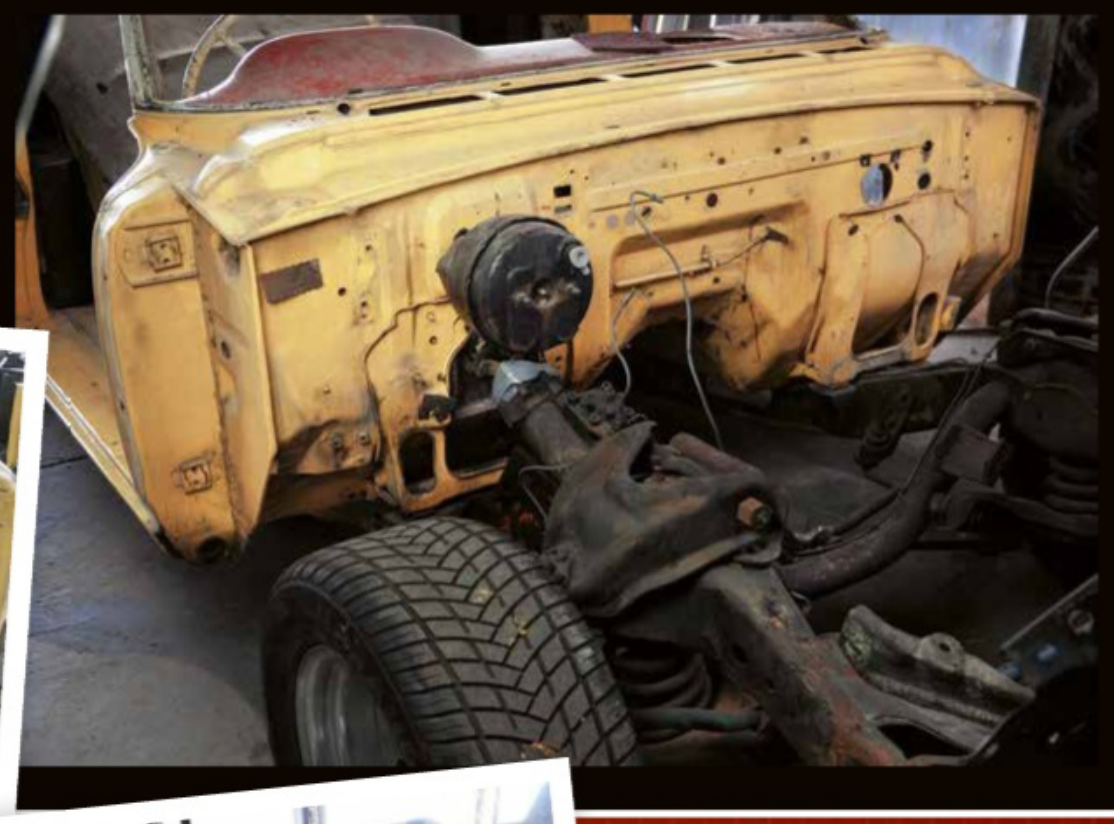
> CHAD ATKINSON BUILDS A CUSTOM FIREWALL, AND MEXICO REFUSES TO PAY FOR IT

A LOT of fabrication goes into creating the smoothed-out engine bays you've seen in *Street Machine* over the years. In this two-part article, we'll give you a little insight into what's involved, starting this month with how to fabricate a flat firewall.

STEP 01

This 60s Galaxie's firewall is a bit messy, so instead of trying to weld up holes and even things out from side to side for a symmetrical look, we decide to just remove the whole lot and start from scratch.



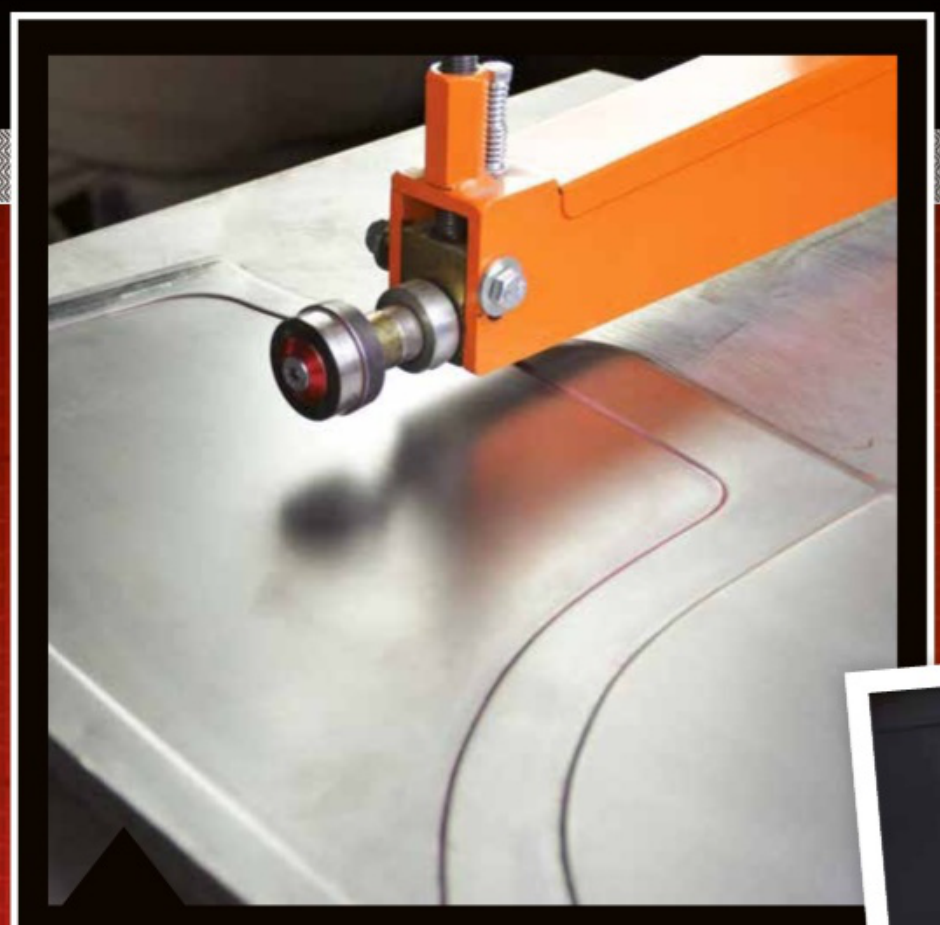


STEP 02

Working neatly along the edges with a 1mm cutting disc on a five-inch grinder and an air hacksaw, the whole firewall is quickly removed in one piece. The vehicle's front panels are then refitted to work out the alignment and clearances for the new inner guards we'll make later on. Not all vehicles are going to have a bolt-on front clip like this one, but the basics remain the same.

STEP 03

The old firewall is laid face-down on the bench and used as a template. We carefully trace around the edges onto a piece of sheet metal, and some 18mm tape is then added around the perimeter of the trace to allow for the edges that will be folded. We will make this panel in two pieces: a left and a right part, to be joined down the centre.

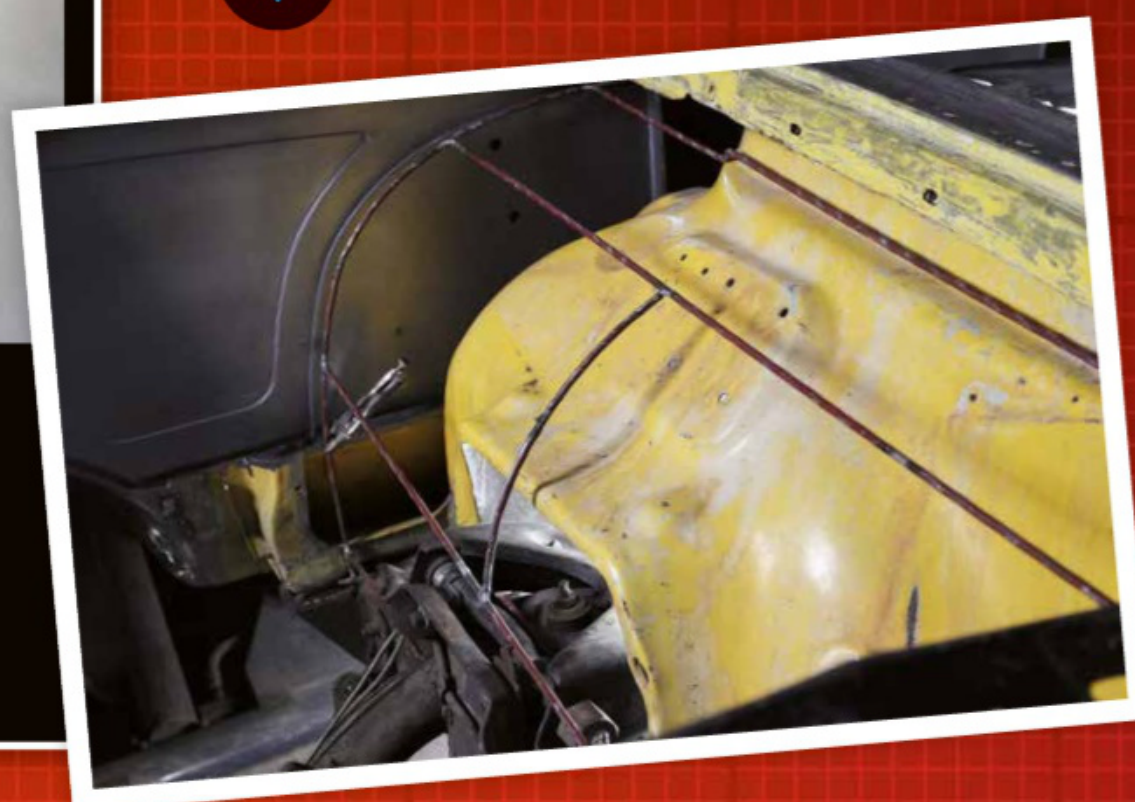


STEP 04

With both pieces cut out (allowing a little extra material on each end where they will be joined together), they are laid on top of each other to check that they mirror one another. A design to be bead-rolled is then laid out, taking into consideration things such as the booster/master and steering column, as we don't want any of these to end up in the middle of a bead. Then it's into the bead roller for some much-needed strength and character.

STEP 05

Sometimes you have to think five steps ahead and work backwards in order to get things to work. In this instance, we need to roll the firewall beads to match the new inner guards, which do not yet exist. So some inner guard frames are mocked up with rod to use as a template for where the beads on the firewall need to be rolled.



STEP 06

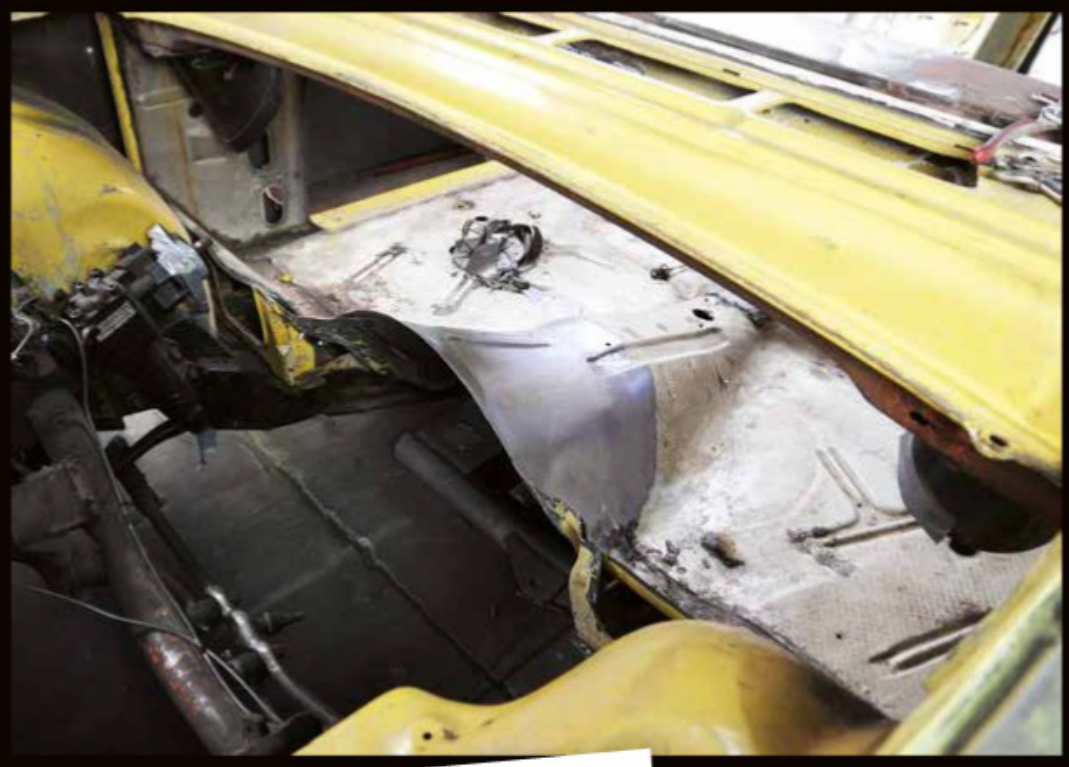
Once the bead rolling has been done, the edges we marked with tape earlier are bent/tipped at 90 degrees. Both pieces are then fitted and clamped to the vehicle, allowing the ends to overlap in the centre. One advantage of making this panel in two sections is that we can now adjust each piece to get them to fit perfectly.

STEP 07

The centre is marked and the excess material from both panels trimmed, best achieved using a scribe and a 1mm cutting disc. The two panels can now be tacked together while still in the car and then removed. TIG welding takes place back on the bench, and we now have a one-piece firewall.

STEP 08

The factory bellhousing recess and tunnel isn't going to work anymore. The fact that it has been crudely patched with tin, screws and silicone is reason enough for a new one to be fabricated at the same time as the new firewall. Some card is used for a template, then transferred onto metal.



STEP 09

While an area could have been recessed for the master cylinder, it wouldn't have contributed to the look we were after. Thankfully, there are numerous aftermarket set-ups that allow the brake master to be relocated under the dash.

STEP 10

The one-piece firewall is fitted back into place. The front panels can once again be removed and the alignment of the new trans tunnel sorted out. The lower part of the existing firewall can also be given some attention before things are ready to weld.

SO THERE it is: a fairly basic yet effective firewall. Internal bracing to support the bonnet hinges will also be added, along with all the other bits to finish up the job. Tune in next month as we complete those, and fabricate a pair of custom inner guards.

IN THEORY

STORY & PHOTOS TIM BARTROP

Dr Tim

DOING THE TWIST

> WHEN AND HOW DOES AN ENGINEER PERFORM A TORSION AND BEAMING TEST ON YOUR CAR?

WHEN you radically modify your ride, chances are that your engineer/certifier will have to verify how strong your 'new' vehicle is by doing a torsion and beaming test. As usual, this requirement can vary by jurisdiction, as each state interprets the National Code of Practice for the Modification of Light Vehicles differently.

There are several situations where a torsion and beaming test might be needed. Examples include when the chassis has been modified to fit new rear wheel tubs; the front subframe or chassis has been modified to fit a bigger engine or a new suspension design; the entire floorpan of a unitary-constructed vehicle has been zipped out to make way for a completely revised fabricated chassis; a convertible has been made from a sedan by cutting the roof off; a car has been built from the ground up; or an extended limo has been built.

The torsion and beaming test is designed to check modified vehicles for the two main strength requirements of any chassis: torsional rigidity and beam strength.

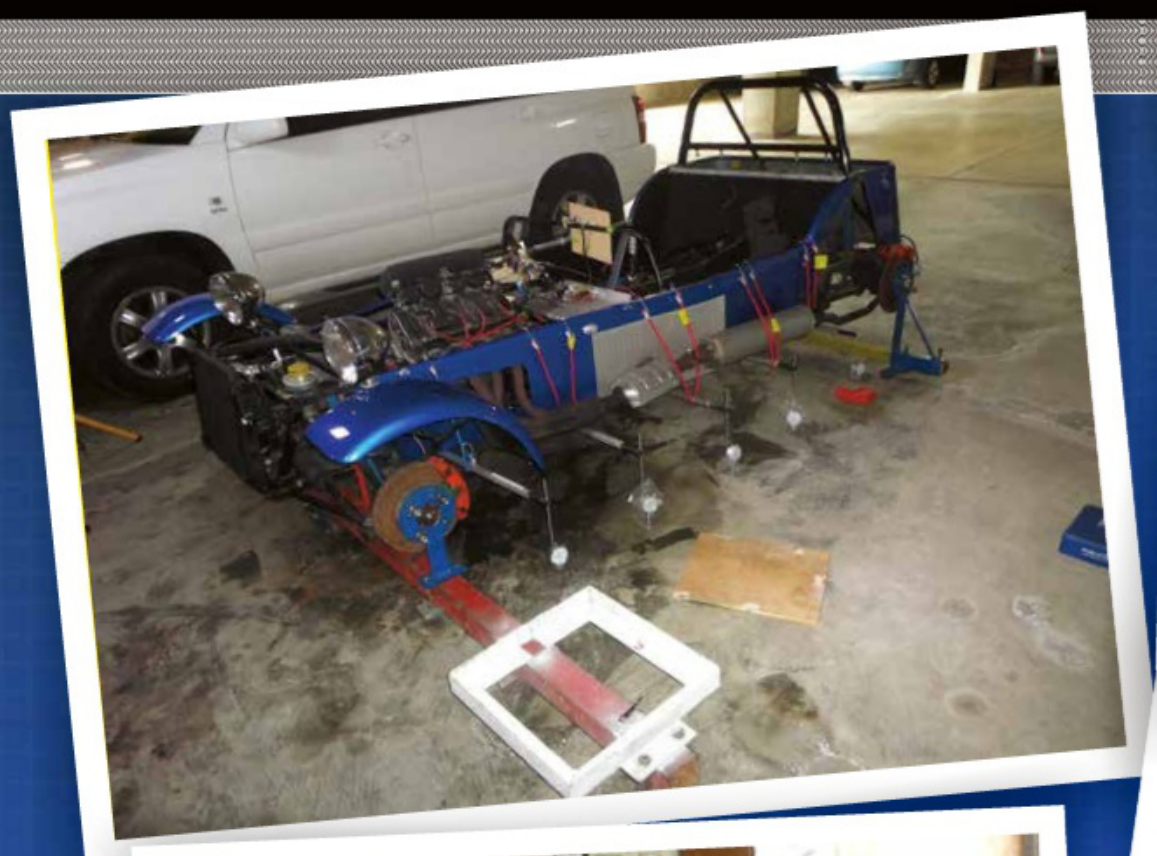
Torsional rigidity is a vehicle's ability to resist twisting under engine torque and the loads applied to the vehicle corners by road conditions. Torsional rigidity is important because a flexible chassis does not allow the suspension to work properly, reacts poorly to engine torque and provides unpredictable handling characteristics.

Beam strength is the strength of the chassis along its length. A vehicle with low beam strength will flex in the middle and will change its characteristics under different loads. Not a good idea for a pick-up!

The torsional rigidity test involves twisting the car while one end is fixed to the ground and the other end pivots around the vehicle's central axis. It's usually the rear that is rigidly fixed, but not for any particular reason. The vehicle is only tested within its wheelbase, where the loads are applied by the suspension. That's because the overhang at each end doesn't contribute to the car's core strength.

It is common to have stands with baseplates bolted to a concrete floor and tack-welded to the car's subframe on the centre-line of the differential (where the bump stops would usually be), in order to hold the rear in place. After the test, the tack welds are cut off and the chassis is restored to original. This method of testing means that the rear suspension must be removed, which is not a problem for a ground-up build where it's all still in bare metal. It's also possible to do the test by fixing the suspension to the ground using stands fixed to the wheel hubs, replacing the springs or shocks with rigid tubes.

On the front, a beam mounted on another stand fixed to the floor with a simple pivot on top is used to apply the twisting load. The pivot is placed on the vehicle centre-line and the beam is welded to the sub-frame or bolted to the wheel hubs in line with the front suspension, extending out either side of the body line to allow the load to be applied.



Once set up, the load is applied (usually a metre from the body centre-line on either side) using weights or a hydraulic cylinder with a calibrated pressure gauge.

The measure of torsional rigidity is in Newton-metres per degree. When the test was first introduced, it was decided that a vehicle with a four-cylinder engine should achieve a rigidity figure of 4000Nm/deg, while a V8-powered vehicle should achieve 6000Nm/deg. The V8 target is equivalent to placing 600kg on the pivoting beam a metre from the vehicle centre-line and getting the body to twist only one degree within the wheelbase. It's still a good guide today, although the latest method uses the gross vehicle mass and track width to calculate the applied load, and the result is then compared to that of an unmodified version of the vehicle, in order to ascertain the effect of the modification.

Increasing loads are applied to the vehicle and deflection measurements are taken at the load point and at regular points along the length of the vehicle. The loads are restricted to the elastic range of the vehicle so that when the load is released it returns to its original position. The measurements taken along the length highlight any weak zones in the body, such as door openings, and remedial action might need to be taken if the body does not reach the target figure.

The beam test is carried out with the pivoting beam also fixed, in order to prevent rotation. A load equivalent to twice the passenger load is then applied, distributed within the interior, and deflection is measured primarily mid-vehicle to determine the level of bending. The standard passenger load is deemed to be 68kg. Loads are applied using bags of a suitable product of known mass. A bend level of 1mm mid-vehicle is considered a good result in this test, but not more than 1.5 times the original vehicle's deflection is required.

Next month we'll talk more on this topic, and explain how to get good torsional rigidity results for your ride and improve on an OEM body.

STIFF PROPOSTION?

Here are some examples of the torsional rigidity of certain models.

MODEL	VEHICLE RIGIDITY (Nm/degree)
Ferrari 430	27,600
Ferrari 430 convertible	10,200
2003 Ford Mustang	16,000
2003 Ford Mustang convertible	4800
2005 Ford Mustang	21,000
2005 Ford Mustang convertible	9500
2015 Jaguar F-Type	33,000
2015 Jaguar F-Type convertible	18,000

STORY KIAN HEAGNEY **PHOTOS** NATHAN JACOBS & *SM* ARCHIVES

BRONZE WAILER

> RICCARDO PONTONIO'S 1600HP VK COMMODORE MADE A STONKING DEBUT AT DRAG CHALLENGE 2019

YOU'RE looking at one of the latest builds to roll out of the MPW Performance stable: Riccardo Pontonio's VK Commodore, which copped a complete makeover just in time for Drag Challenge 2019.

The car was no slouch to begin with, having previously run Drag Challenge sporting a tickled LSA that propelled the car to a PB of 9.21@151mph. But for DC 2019, Ric decided to take the thing to the next level. "A lot needed to be changed on the car; it needed a 'cage and so on, so I figured I may as well go all out this time and build it to run serious numbers," he said.

What resulted was a plan to ditch the old LSA mill in favour of a twin-turbo 427ci Dart LS Next combo. "Ric's new goals for the car were 1000kW *[1340hp]* at the hubs and seven-second timeslips," said MPW's Adam Rogash. "It's so much easier to keep pushing a turbo set-up like this than with the old LSA."

The new Dart LS was taken care of by Powerhouse Engines, and it sports all the fruit. A custom Kelford camshaft, JE pistons, Wiseco rods, Dart CCW crank, Plazmaman intake manifold and a pair of 72mm BorgWarner turbos from GCG provide the neddies. A new Powerglide was sourced from Transmission Specialities with a TCE converter, while the Strange nine-inch rear end transfers the power to the ground through 275 radials.

A full ANDRA-spec rollcage was also custom fabricated in-house at MPW, and the car was turned around in less than nine weeks, hitting the hub dyno just a week out from Drag Challenge. Controlled by a Haltech Elite 2500, the VK comfortably pumped out 1127kW (1511hp) at the hubs, well and truly smashing Ric's expectations. "Adam took me for a drive in it and I was shitting myself; I didn't know how the hell I was going to get it down the track!" he said.

With only a day's worth of street miles in hand and no track testing, Ric dove head-first into Drag Challenge '19. "The first pass for the car was on Day One at Calder, and even on wastegate pressure – which is around 10psi – we still couldn't get it to run slower than an 8.9," Ric said.

After the first hit, Ric was hooked and any fears about controlling the thing evaporated. "It drove so differently to the blown car, even though it was only three-tenths quicker," he said. "I just wanted to go all out after that!"

I FIGURED I MAY AS WELL GO ALL OUT THIS TIME AND BUILD IT TO RUN SERIOUS NUMBERS

Drag Challenge 2019 was Ric's second successful crack at the event, having made his debut in 2018 with the old blown LSA package. Cheekily, he didn't have a 'cage that year, so he had to restrict the pace until MPW got the chance to renovate the interior with the nice new rollcage and fit the new engine package

EXTERIOR: Ric's VK was an original one-owner car when he got it, and although virtually nothing under the skin has been left untouched, the exterior remains largely the same. "The paint and body are all original; all I had painted was the bonnet and spoiler," he said. "I like it like that – I don't want a perfect show car; I want to use it"

INTERIOR: In keeping with Ric's desire for the car to retain a semi-original appearance, he went to the effort of colour-matching the rollcage, and even found the original Holden material to cover the Kirkey race seat

HEROIC DEEDS

RIC started off his 2020 with a bang at *Street Machine* Summernats 33, winning the Forced-Induction V8 class in the Haltech Horsepower Heroes dyno competition in a three-way shootout between him and fellow MPW combatants Luke Foley and Chris Cutajar. “I didn’t really have any expectations going into it, so I’m pretty stoked with the win,” said Ric. The VK upped its peak power number to 1651rwhp on the Mainline hub dyno, but there’s still more in it. “That was on 28psi; Adam says we can probably push it as far as 40psi,” Rick said.

AFTER THE FIRST HIT, RIC WAS HOOKED AND ANY FEARS ABOUT CONTROLLING THE THING EVAPORATED

BELOW: MPW's Adam Rogash traded in the racing boots at Drag Challenge last year to run support for several customer cars, including Ric's. With bucketloads of knowledge both on and off the track, Adam was constantly developing the freshly completed VK to keep Ric battling at the top of his class all week

Being the voice of reason, Adam eased Ric and the car into the week with a bit more speed, leaving Calder on Day One with a score of 8.24@155mph. "That pass was actually a bit of a dud because the car cut out at 1000 feet due to an EGT warning," said Ric.

But other than a dodgy shifter cable giving them trouble on Day Two at Mildura, Ric and the MPW crew got the VK through the rest of the week unscathed. With eighth-mile bests of 5.24@137mph on Day Three at Mildura and a 5.28@137mph in challenging conditions on Day Four at Portland, Ric returned to Calder for the last day with intentions of capping off the week with a seven-second slip, but got cut short.

"We were ready to turn it up and chase that seven, but the rain stopped us before we could have a real crack," Ric said. He still pushed out a PB of 8.10@174mph before the rain, giving him fourth place in the hotly contested Haltech Radial Blown class and sixth overall – an incredible performance for a car that was completely untested and finished just a week out from the event.

"I'm super happy with the car," Ric said. "I take it out to the gym and to do the shopping and stuff; it's so awesome."

Other than tidying up a few minor details, Ric plans to enjoy the car as-is. "We're going up to Sydney soon to see what we can do. I'd love a 7.80 or somewhere around there, but we'll see," he said. "I just want one of those red *[Seven-Second Club]* hats, so that's my goal for Drag Challenge this year."

RICCARDO PONTONIO
1984 HOLDEN COMMODORE VK SL
Class: Haltech Radial Blown

SPECS
Engine: 427ci LS Next Dart 2
Turbos: GCG 72mm BorgWarner
ECU: Haltech Elite 2500
Transmission: Powerglide
Converter: TCE
Diff: Strange 9in, 3.25:1 gears
Power: 1651rwhp

Previous PB: 9.21@151mph
Best DC 2019 Pass: 8.10@174mph

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YOUNG GUN

STORY KIAN HEAGNEY **PHOTOS** JOSEPH HUI

DEAN GRIMA

> 21, PENRITH, NSW

WITH the 1980s well and truly behind us, the odds of seeing a crispy, clean VK Commodore out and about are slim, with most either locked in sheds or gone the way of the dodo. That's not the case for young buck Dean Grima and his time-warp VK SL though, which is in great nick despite being anything but a shed queen.

The Commodore is in impressive condition; how did you come to own it?
I've had it for roughly three or four years and I got it off the original owners. They daily-drove it for a little while and then it was really only used to go to church and back before I got it. It's all pretty much in original condition, and I've always had a thing for the VKs. I was going to turn it into a Brock replica, but with the condition it's in and the amount of Brock replicas kicking around, I decided to leave it mostly as-is.

How often do you get it out for a drive?
I drive it every weekend. I get home Friday night, jump out of my BT50 daily driver and straight into the Commodore. It's still on full rego, because club plates would be no good to me – I wouldn't be able to drive it enough!

You took it to Summernats this year; how did you go?
I had such an epic time. I've been to Summernats before, but this was the first time entering my own car, and I just had a blast driving it around and cruising. I met another guy at Summernats a few years ago with a VK in the same colour, which is basically a bigger brother on steroids with a V8 and so on. So we met up this year and cruised around a bit together. It was awesome watching people on the cruise route staring at two virtually identical VKs.

Where did your passion for cars start?
Ever since I've been little, all I've cared about is cars. Funnily enough, I was actually a Ford kid growing up, and Dad had a tubbed TE Cortina in the shed. I loved watching V8 Supercars as a kid, and I never played any sport or video games or anything like that; it was just cars, cars, cars.

What do you do for work?
I do resto work and paint; that's what my apprenticeship is in. I do a lot of work for Damien 'Chubby' Lowe at his workshop; he

Aged around 21 or younger and have a neat ride? Send some pics and info to: Young Guns, *Street Machine*, Locked Bag 12, Oakleigh, Vic 3166 or email us at: younggun@bauer-media.com.au.

INFMUS

THE story behind the name of Dean's VK is one of youthful indiscretion. Dean was driving his brother to the school formal and his brother wanted to see a burnout. "I couldn't let him down, could I?" Dean laughs. So he lit it up – right in front of the cops sitting at the lights opposite. "It went viral on social media and everyone was asking about it; that's why the plates are INFMUS. I learnt my lesson though; I don't do that anymore!"

IT'S STILL ON FULL REGO, BECAUSE CLUB PLATES WOULD BE NO GOOD TO ME – I WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO DRIVE IT ENOUGH!

has been awesome for me to learn stuff from.

Any future plans for the VK?

Well I was going to save for a house, but Chubby found me a 308, so I think we'll probably stroke that out to a 355 and put some more power into it if my bank balance allows. All I've done so far is repaint the bumpers, wheels and added a few dress-up bits on the 202, so I'd probably get in there and shave the engine bay and go from there. I just don't want it to snowball!

Do you have a dream build you'd love to do some day?

All I want is a mean weekender I can use all the time, but I have made sketches of a Chevelle or Nova I'd love to put together some day and take to Summernats and just have people drool all over it.

IRON MAIDEN

STORY CARLY DALE **PHOTOS** GREG FORSTER

YVETTE GLUYAS

> MELBOURNE, VIC

PACKING stout 15x10 Auto Drags tucked beneath a mini-tubbed rear, the menacing black XP sedan of Yvette Gluyas is one tough-looking machine. And that's exactly the way Yvette envisioned it.

Beautiful XP you have there, Yvette! Tell us about it.

I always was an XW and XY person, but when I spotted our neighbour Anthony's XP in factory black with factory red interior 20 years ago, I fell in love with the combo. Anthony eventually pulled it off the road, and that's when my husband Shane and I began asking to buy it. Four-and-a-half years ago I wanted a car of my own, as Shane kept selling off his cars, which would devastate me every time. So, I needed a car that I could get attached to and keep. I had sacrificed having my own car for a house and kids, so it was the right time and the XP was finally up for sale.

What condition was it in?

It was partly bare metal with surface rust and in poor condition from sitting outside. But I could see past all of that to my vision of a tough, black, dumped XP with a lumpy motor and classic Center Lines.

What have you done to it?

The XP was fully engineered, so I didn't want a total rebuild as I was keen to have the car on the road and driving. So, Shane learned how to paint and coated the XP in black acrylic in the back shed. All Race Fabrications redid the tubs and modified the rear to suit. To make it sound tough, Randall at HeadzUp Performance Engines built the 302ci Windsor with a roller cam. Behind the Windsor is a C10 trans and a sheet-metal nine-inch diff. I love driving the XP and I can hop in and drive go for a cruise on the highway without it screaming at 3500rpm.

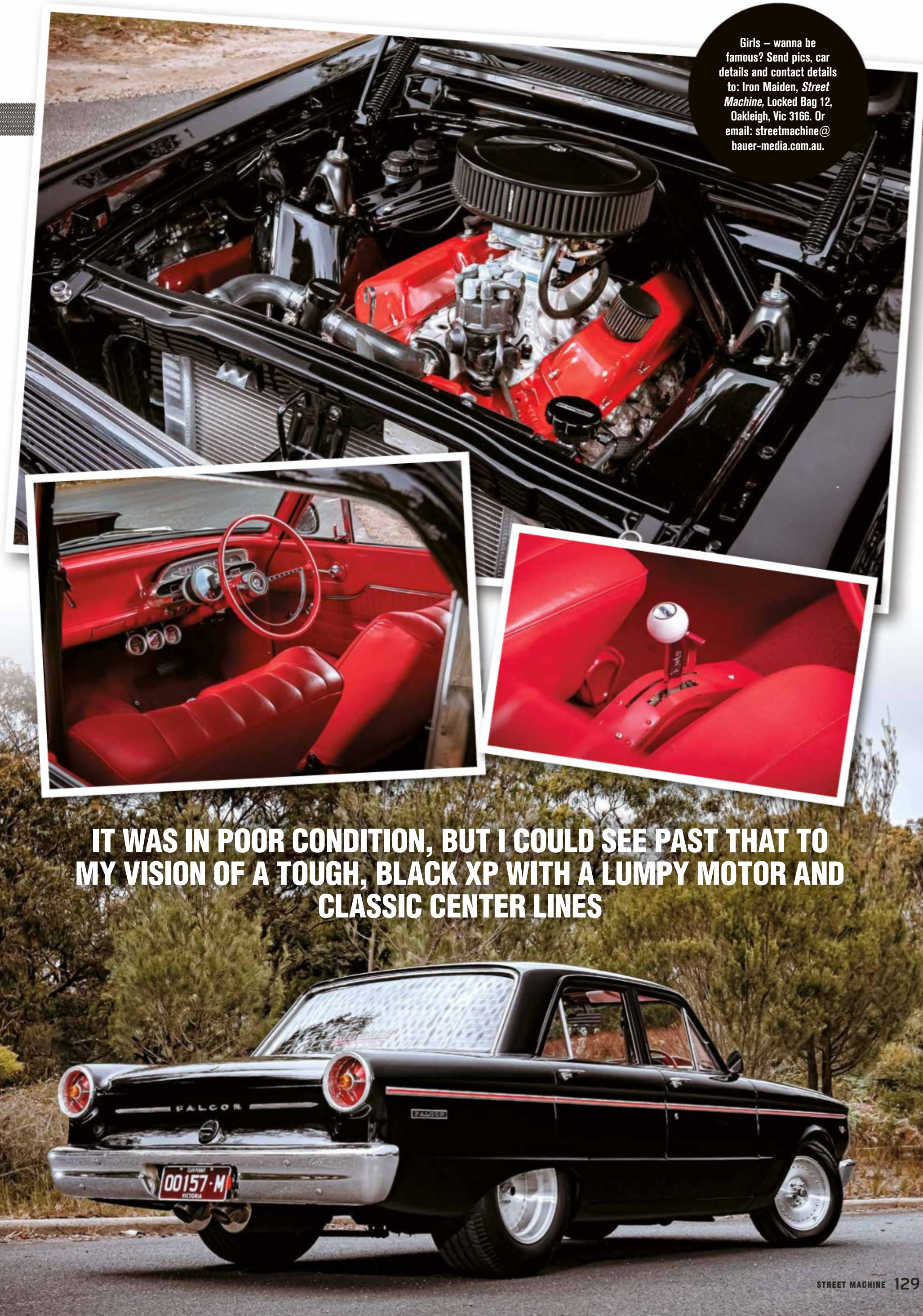
Have you always been a car enthusiast?

My passion came from Shane. I met him when I was 17 years old and he was 16. Shane was into cars, and he's taught me the differences between models and the mechanical side; he is very supportive and encouraging. I help out in the shed, getting dirty and pulling things apart – I really enjoy it. I've learned a lot from reading *Street Machine* magazines too.

What's the future hold for your XP?

I drive the XP every weekend, as I just love to be out cruising. We are always doing mods to the car; the red-taped stripe on the chrome side-flashing is new, though I can remove it if I want to go back to how it was. Also, I hope to add EFI soon, and maybe a turbo. I didn't want to go turbo, as I love the old-school V8 sound, but I'm being convinced that I can keep the rumble! We already have a BorgWarner S475 sitting there, but it'd want the upgrade to be done properly for safe cruising.

Girls – wanna be famous? Send pics, car details and contact details to: Iron Maiden, ***Street Machine,*** Locked Bag 12, Oakleigh, Vic 3166. Or email: streetmachine@bauer-media.com.au.



IT WAS IN POOR CONDITION, BUT I COULD SEE PAST THAT TO MY VISION OF A TOUGH, BLACK XP WITH A LUMPY MOTOR AND CLASSIC CENTER LINES

STAGE WRITE

BOB KOTMEL

IN LATE January, four-time *Hot Rod* Drag Week winner Tom Bailey set a new street-car record in his 1969 Camaro, running 5.773@259.66mph over the quarter-mile at Bradenton Motorsports Park in Florida. Looking at footage of the run, it looks like a soft boost-controlled launch; the car barely taps the wheelie bar on the ground.

Apparently, after the run Tom and engine builder Steve Morris headed off in the Camaro to get some take-away! Make no mistake: Tom's car is street-legal in the States. During last year's Drag Week, Tom towed a trailer from track to track over five days, and became the first car to run a five-second pass at the event.

One of the things I've been banging the keyboards about lately is the importance of reducing weight when it comes to drag racing. Ever wonder why there are so many Ford Capris racing? It's because they're light. With a little four-cylinder, a stock Capri had a kerb weight of 2053lb. I asked Gary Robson what the racing weight of his 396 big-block Capri was, and he told me it was 2860lb with a cast-iron block, heads, manifold, ANDRA-legal steel rollcage and driver. It later ran a factory ZZ 572ci Chev crate motor for a best of 9.0@151mph in 2007.

If a rat motor can be shoehorned into a Capri, a five-litre Coyote conversion should be a snack – and will make engineers happy. Tuners like David Sheehy at CPV Performance have no trouble making 600 weight-shifted Moroso horses from a nearly stock four-valve Coyote. Even if a Coyote Capri never went near a drag strip, it would make an awesome street machine.

A Coyote conversion into the iconic early Mustang body should also be a piece of cake. A 1965 hardtop was 2562lb and the fastback was 2621lb, which is around 1100lb lighter than a late-model Mustang, so that's a recipe for a quick streeter right there.

Bill Kuhlmann, the first Doorslammer driver to run 200mph, began his racing career in his 'Leapin' Lizzard' Mustang hardtop. It was street-driven for two years, weighed 2500lb, and ran 10.80s when Bill raced it between 1966 and 1970. Street-driven 10s would have been incredibly quick back in the late 60s.

If you read last month's column and started shopping for a second-hand hot rod to race, you need to know how much it weighs before handing over the cash. Some all-steel hot rods can weigh 4000lb or more with the driver. That's right up there with the weight of a luxury VE or VY Commodore.

Another good idea is to look for a hot rod that has an adjustable drag racing-type four-link and wheelie bars. Over a decade ago, Gary Robson asked me for a 400ci small-block Chev recipe for his red Capri. The 11.5:1, Racer Pro 23°-headed small-block made 550hp and ultimately found its way into Scott Carmody's '34 coupe, which had a proper drag racing chassis. The internet is full of the '34's bumper-scraping launches. Gary and Scott still own the Capri and '34 respectively. Don't know if it is possible, but it would be great to see both cars engineered, registered and raced at Drag Challenge.

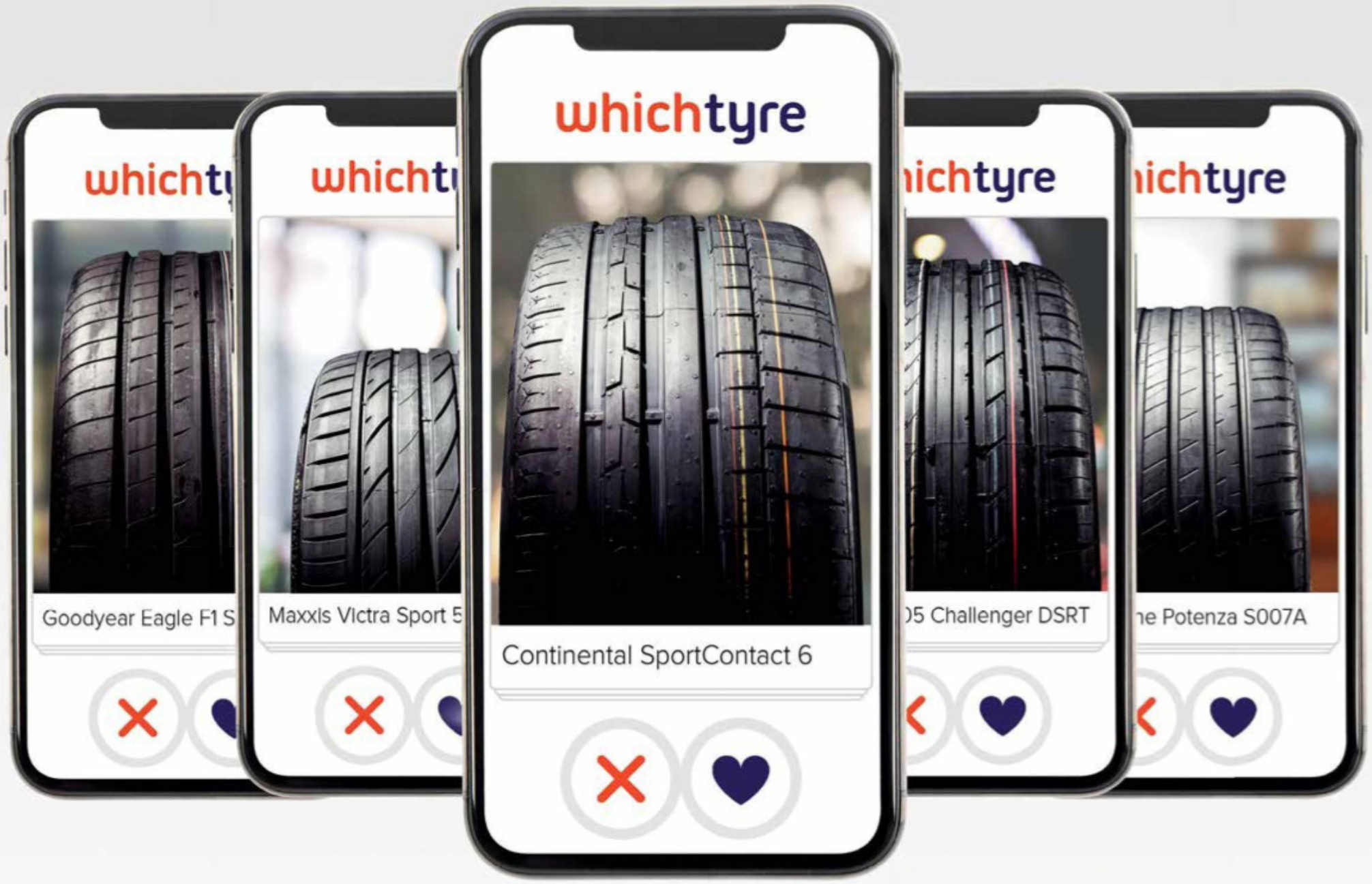
The next thing is a rollcage. You are going to need a hot rod with a steel 'cage that meets ANDRA or IHRA safety specs, as well as having state hot rod rego. They are out there. If you can't find one second-hand, chances are you'll have to fit a rollcage and get it approved by an engineer. Personally, I like the look of hot rod coupes with a rollcage built in so they're barely visible. For pure light weight though, an open T-bucket shell with a padded 'cage would be hard to beat.

One of the negative aspects of racing a hot rod is poor aerodynamics. Many rods are square and terrible for punching a hole through air. If you wanted to minimise air drag, the chop-top coupes and roadsters raced at Bonneville Speed Week could be a great inspiration. A hot rod built along the lines of a salt racer would look deadly on the street, and potentially be super-quick on the strip if set up right.

Why am I emphasising vehicle weight so much? Well, I loved my old big-block '57 Chev, 308 HQ van and 355 HG ute, but with 20/20 hindsight I wished I'd chosen a lighter car to race over the years. I hope that highlighting the importance of minimising weight will help some of our younger readers who might be about to enter the high-performance world choose their street machine wisely.

FOUR-TIME *HOT ROD* DRAG WEEK WINNER TOM BAILEY SET A NEW STREET-CAR RECORD IN HIS 1969 CAMARO, RUNNING 5.773@259.66MPH IN FLORIDA

It’s a match!



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DIRTY STUFF

WILLIAM PORKER

YOU wouldn't reckon, what with all those precision high-tensile bolts, that flywheels could ever come loose and explode, but they sure do. Cast-iron flywheels are notorious for this, which is why the officials keeping blokes safe at the quarter-mile drags insist that a solid steel scattershield be fitted around the clutch housing. That way, when a flywheel lets go the shield is there to catch all the bits instead of them chopping off your legs.

Clutches are not immune from this, either. Stock clutches mostly have cast-iron centres, and I have seen the results when these suddenly fail.

How do you fix this? Well, lightening a cast-iron flywheel can help, either by taking metal off the back face and/or milling the clutch face between bolts to give you a scalloped look. But while a stock flywheel fixing to the crankshaft usually involves up to six bolts, with maybe one dowel, you can increase security by adding extra dowels. Fit the flywheel with all its bolts and dowels, then drill between the bolts with the exact dowel-sized drill, then tap the new dowels home. So long as the flywheel is refitted in the identical spot, the new dowel holes will always line up, and this will not affect the flywheel's balance.

Even better insurance is to buy, or have made, a decent steel flywheel. They're expensive, but are lighter and unburstable, though you will still need those extra dowels. Competition billet-steel cranks made for high-revving engines usually go up in flywheel-fixing bolt numbers – commonly up to six or eight, depending on how much room the crank designers have got. And the bolts are high-tensile specials, made so that the bolt thread is only long enough to engage with the crank and the rest of the bolt shoulder isn't threaded so that it is a sliding fit in the reamed flywheel bolt holes, eliminating sideways movement.

Competition clutches can get super-expensive, as they have smaller diameters to a stock clutch in order to cut down on weight and reduce the spinning drag that you get with a standard unit. They also allow for multiple, small-diameter clutch plates with mostly sintered bronze facings, have changeable spring-steel diaphragms to alter the clamping load on these plates, and usually run to titanium driving centres. Amazing to look at, weigh almost nothing and cost heaps.

> THE FLYWHEEL EXPLODED. RED-HOT BITS HIT THE TAR AND PUNCTURED THE FUEL TANK. MURPHY'S LAW SAID THE ZEPHYR WOULD CATCH FIRE, AND IT DID

A bloke I knew who raced a Mk1 Ford Cortina put a lot of effort into screwing big power out of the engine, which meant constant revs in the high band. So to tame all of this, he fitted a clutch pressure plate out of a Holden FJ. It had a heavier clamping load and was okay with the Cortina clutch plate, so he had it all balanced and went racing.

But the FJ driving plate had an inbuilt major weakness: it was cast iron and had four side cut-outs to allow the fitting of spring-steel straps to take the driving load from the spinning driving plate. The go-faster blokes cut slots in the steel pressure-plate cover, welded in 6mm-thick steel pieces to fit into the slots and threw away the spring-steel straps. That worked okay in FJ Holdens, but the Cortina revved a fair bit higher, and one day at the Lakeside circuit, this bloke was flying around the back sweeper when the clutch let go and the bits made a clean exit out through the scuttle vent in front of the windscreen. No scattershield, only the stock bellhousing. The guy was lucky not to get body damage.

Another historic racing bloke built himself a single-seat special with 1930s Ford A components. Got an overhead-valve cylinder head from the US to fit to the sidevalve block, and made a really good job of creating that car.

It went really well until he decided to race at Adelaide International Raceway, which has a high, fast banking. Up near the bordering fence, the big cast-iron flywheel let go, and at that speed, it was out of control and all but destroyed the Ford A when it slammed into the wall.

But the worst case of an escaping flywheel disaster happened in Brisbane, when a bloke I knew had worked a Mk2 Zephyr with full race cam, triple SU carbs and a later-model Mk3 cylinder head. He had a habit of smoking burnouts with his mates in the car, and this night, flat-out in second gear in the manual cogbox as he was going around a sweeping suburban corner, you guessed it: flywheel exploded. Red-hot bits hit the tar and one chunk punctured the fuel tank. Murphy's Law said the Zephyr would catch fire, and it did.

The guys got out okay, and watched with the spectators as the reworked Mk2 burnt into puddles of rubber, glass and metal.

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VICTOR BRAY

PRO MOD MADE ITS FIRST APPEARANCE IN JANUARY AT SYDNEY DRAGWAY, WITH 10 OR SO ENTRIES INCLUDING TWIN-TURBO V8 MUSTANGS AND CAMAROS

IT'S still only early in 2020 and there's already a candidate for drag racing's most amazing story of the year. South Georgia Motorsports Park has announced plans to extend its race track to accommodate half-mile racing. There is one slight problem: there isn't quite enough room at the end of the track, so there will be a minor curve in the shutdown area. The organisers say it won't be much of a problem, because by the time the cars arrive there they will be running under 100mph.

How would half-mile racing work? I spoke to Top Fuel tuner Santo Rapisarda Jr about how he'd go about setting a car up in order to keep it in one piece at the end of a half-mile. "The first thing you would need is a much larger fuel tank," he said. "Obviously you would need to have a very healthy engine with a very soft tune-up. The scary part would be the tyres. Tyres are not rated for the speeds you could theoretically run. That would be a real issue."

From a Pro Slammer perspective, running a half-mile would be a wild ride. How it would pan out depends on your goal. Could a '57 Chevy run a half-mile at over 300mph? Aerodynamics would be a significant problem – maybe something like Ben's Corvette could handle the speed. I reckon you would need to fit the appropriate diff ratio, then go to a seven-speed Liberty to spread the gears out and come up with a combination to run the distance. I would also drop the compression and take out some timing to make sure the engine survived.

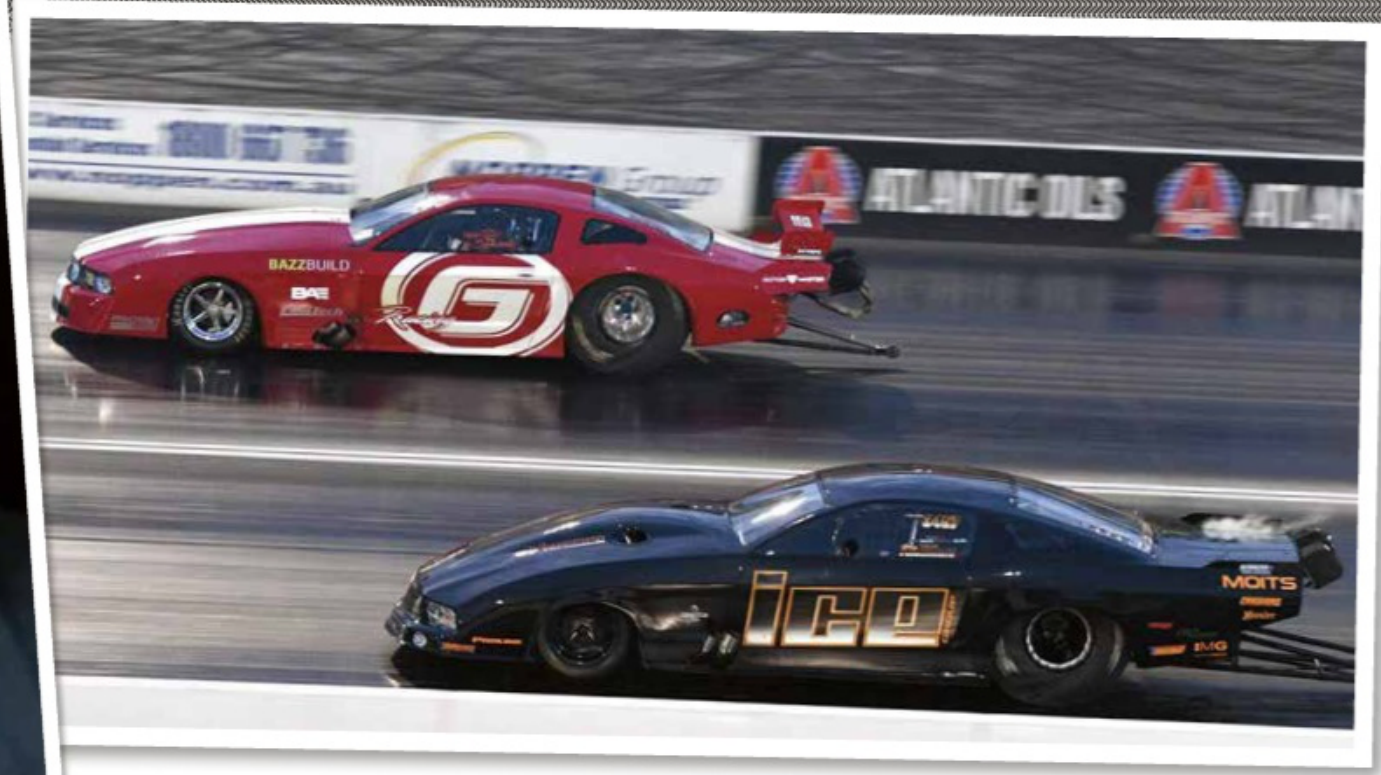
After years of rumour, speculation, gossip and a lot of trash talk, Pro Mod has finally landed in Australia courtesy of IHRA Australia and with the blessing of 400 Thunder.

According to 400 Thunder General Manager Steve Bettes, "Pro Mod racers and race fans alike have been waiting for this category to be formalised at major events in Australia for many years and we are very pleased to be able to make this happen in 2020."

The main difference between Pro Mod racing and what we might call traditional heads-up racing is that Pro Mod racers will initially be set a target ET of 5.85 seconds. Whichever racer has the best reaction time and runs closest to the target – whether it's over or under – will be declared the winner. Traditionally in drag racing, the quickest car wins. Will spectators be happy to see the car that's first over the line possibly not being crowned the winner?

The category made its first appearance in late January at the Santo's Summer Thunder meeting at Sydney Dragway, with 10 or so entries. The cars included twin-turbo V8 Mustangs and Camaros, but the quickest car was a 6.9-second six-cylinder Toyota.

I watched every round in Sydney, and was disappointed to see the twin-turbo V8s lifting before the quarter-mile so as not break out of their 5.85-second max. These cars are extreme and meant to go hard, fast and run to their potential.



TOP LEFT: Fresh from an incredibly successful US stint in NHRA Top Fuel, Aussie racer Richie Crampton was recently back on home soil at Santo's Summer Thunder in Sydney, piloting a Top Fuel dragster for the Rapisarda Autosport International team

So, what does Pro Mod offer? The IHRA reckons that it will be a great spectacle for race fans while helping to contain costs for racers. Haven't we heard that before about drag racing? Yet over the past couple of years, the cost to compete in Pro Slammer has increased by well over $30,000 due to zero cost containment.

There are implications for the three classes we currently have in the 400 Thunder series: Pro Slammer, Pro Alcohol and Pro Stock. Can the sport support another category? Look at the list for Slammers at Sydney; there were only seven entries. Three weeks earlier, Pro Alcohol at Willowbank Raceway attracted eight cars, and Pro Stock at the same meet had six.

There's no denying the attraction of Pro Mod to a generation of racers who want to compete at the major events on the calendar. It'll also be attractive to some Pro Slammer racers because the target 5.85-second time is an achievable goal. What will be interesting is watching the turbo cars leave the startline like a rocket – don't forget some of them can run 270mph plus – then suddenly pulling the chutes to slow down. There's a word for that: sandbagging. It's not illegal, but it's probably not within the spirit of the sport. It will happen, because there will be some cars with 5000-6000hp up against others with maybe one-tenth that power.

Another thing to keep in mind is that turbo cars take a little more time on the startline to prepare and stage. You can't hold a blown car up, because they get very hot quickly. The NHRA doesn't make any allowances for the differences; the cars have to come up to the startline and go racing – no mucking around. If you screw the other lane around the starter will give you a red.

The show Pro Mod put on in Sydney was impressive – no question. Whether the entry list can be sustained will be a major factor in determining whether the category continues to grow.

Would I like to have a run in Pro Mod? Sure. It could happen one day. The '57 Chevy already runs a 5.85. Basically, all I would need is to put a bigger blower on the car so I can 'sandbag' like the turbo cars.

We've had two rounds of Pro racing this year, three weeks apart and both in January. We really need to look at the calendar, particularly regarding the weather. Willowbank Raceway in summer means getting baked. For spectators sitting in the grandstand on metal bench seats when the temperature is over 35°C, it can't be much fun. At Sydney, the meet was called off due to rain, and when we went back a week later, the entry list had really taken a battering.

It was good to see Richie Crampton return to Australia and race at Sydney Dragway. He was a hit with the fans; we love our home-grown heroes. Every time I walked past his pit, he was out there posing for photos and signing autographs. Not sure if or when he'll be coming back. So far, he's only raced in Sydney. I'd love to see him up here at Willowbank Raceway.

IN GEAR

01 FIT 'N' FIXED

WHETHER it's fuel lines, catch cans, coolant lines or oil feeds, AN fittings are the go-to choice for us car nuts – they get used for the lot. But as good as they are, even AN fittings aren't immune to damage or leaks, and if they fail, replacing the fittings is often the only solution. Now Koul Tools has released its new fitting fixers, specifically for tackling damaged AN stuff. They use an inverted-cone, diamond-dust-coated lapping head to repair the conical sealing surface on 37° fittings, restoring the seal to the fitting's flared tube. You can find out more at summitracing.com.

01

02 CATCH & RELEASE

KEEPING unwanted crud out of your engine is good practice, and catch cans are perfect for either standard or high-performance mills. Mishimoto offers a huge range of universal and bolt-in catch can kits, including this neat unit designed specifically for 2018-and-onwards Mustangs. The kit comes with all hoses and fittings required for a sub-30-minute installation, with no drilling required. The cans themselves are made from billet 6061 aluminium, and use a PCV system with a 50-micron bronze filter to keep the junk out of your barking Coyote. You can find out more at mishimoto.com.au.

02

03 HIT THE BOOST

THE expansive Aeroflow catalogue has grown once again with the launch of the new Boosted range of turbochargers. Aimed at those searching for the sweet spot between price and quality, the Boosted snails are available in both journal-bearing oil-cooled and ceramic-bearing water-cooled guises. You have the choice of several different inlet and outlet flanges and a natural cast or high-temp black finish. The external water-cooled wastegates feature a silicone Nomex-reinforced actuator diaphragm and stainless-steel actuator spring. Of course, Aeroflow also stocks heaps of turbo accessories to achieve whatever you need, including CNC blow-off valves, three-stage digital boost controllers and various filters. Find out more and grab a free catalogue from aeroflowperformance.com.

03

04 UNDER PRESSURE

WHETHER you're planning on getting away from the rat-race for a bit, a keen off-roader, or a regular at the track who's always messing around with tyre pressures, the Ryobi ONE+ inflator/deflator should form a vital part of your tool kit. Being battery powered, there's no need for extension cords or messy car battery leads, and it allows you to both inflate and deflate tyres – or anything else – to exactly the pressure you're after, without the need to carry around a bulky air compressor. You can find out more at ryobi.com.au.

05 SUPERMODELS

MAKING elaborate headers and turbo manifolds can be a tricky process, especially with the amount of cutting and welding needed during constant trial and error. The IC Engine Works Header Modelling Kit is an awesome new trick bit of gear that makes complex header fabrication way easier. Just like the good old-fashioned cardboard cut-out, the system of snap-together pieces can be used to make any combo of bends needed, meaning you can model your entire manifold before breaking out the tools. Exhaust header kits are available in $1^5/_8$in to 2in sizes, while sizes up to 3in can be had for full exhaust system mock-ups. Email sales@racemaxdirect.com.au or call RaceMAX Direct on (02) 9791 5030 for more info.

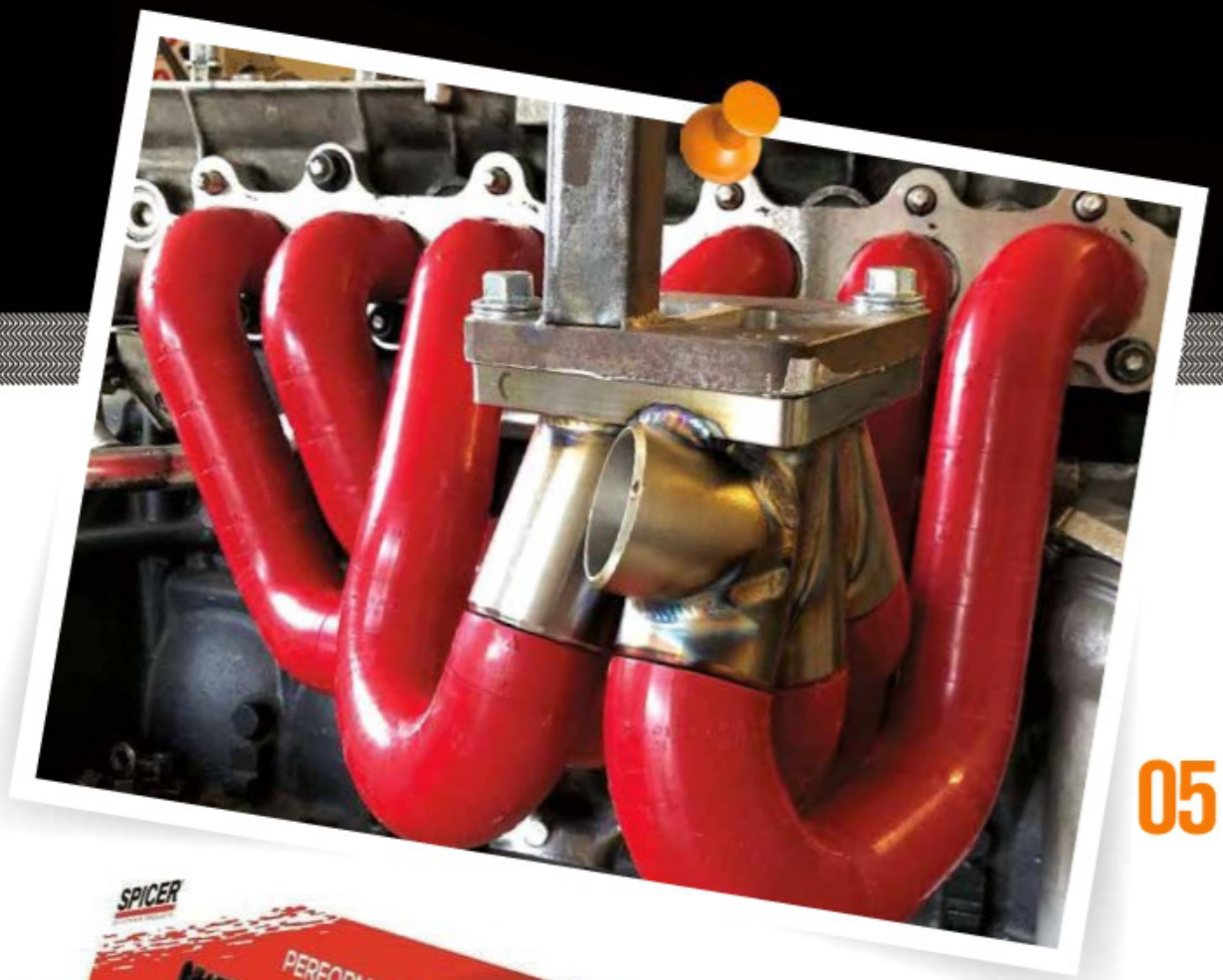
04

06 PONY TAIL

IF YOU'VE got a new-gen Mustang and you want to throw more power at it, it's always a good idea to make sure the rest of your driveline is up to the task. GJ Drivelines now offers a killer new bolt-in tailshaft from the Lite Series, just for the Muzzy fettlers. The one-piece aluminium shaft is 4kg lighter than the factory unit, eliminates the need for a centre bearing, reduces overall load on the driveline and also brings the NVH levels down for peaceful cruising. You can find out more at gjdrivelines.com.au or on (03) 9706 3166.

07 DRESS UP

WE ALWAYS use *Street Machine* Summernats as the perfect venue to debut our new crop of merch for the year, and for 2020 we've gone seriously big. We've got four new T-shirt designs to feast upon, some killer new 80s-inspired tank-tops, Telfo's personal favourite white bucket hats, a brand-new deck of playing cards, baby onesies, doggo apparel, Drag Challenge merch and loads more. Jump online now and grab some killer kit, because we don't restock this stuff once it's gone. Find them at shop.streetmachine.com.au.



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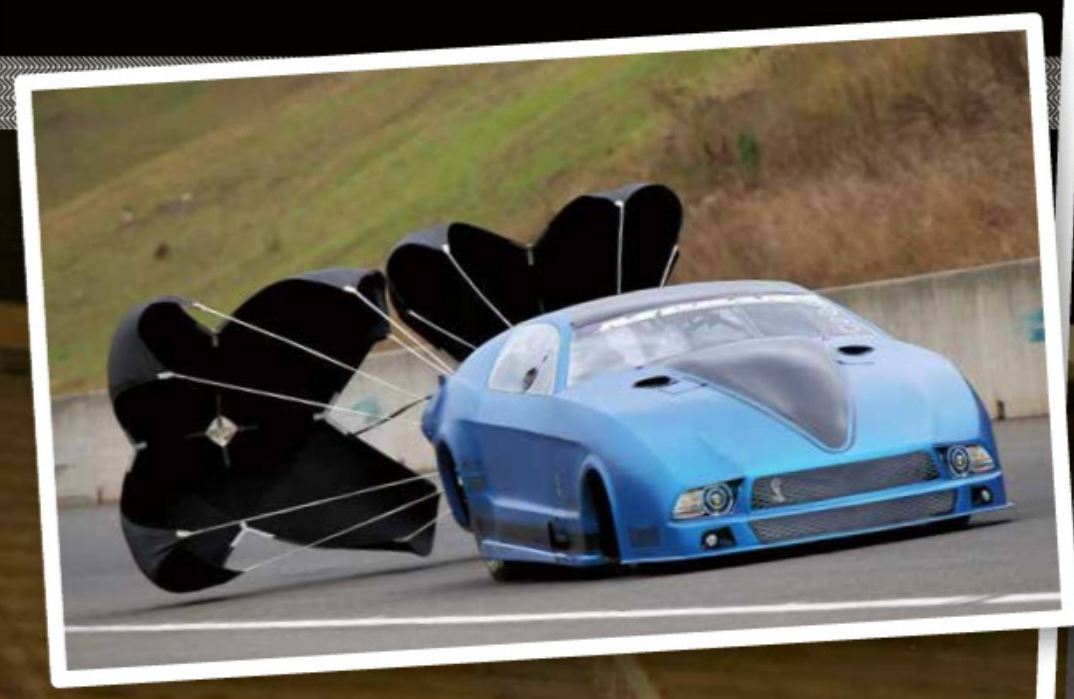

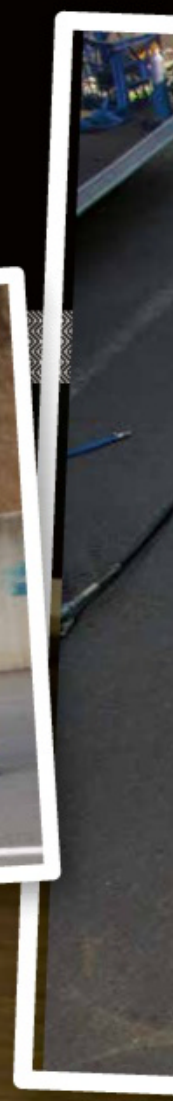

PHOTOS GRANT STEPHENS

HIGH FIVE!

> ROBERT CAMPISI'S MUSTANG RUNS A FIVE-SECOND PASS IN SYDNEY

IT'S been a long time coming, but the undisputed king of spool Robert Campisi has finally made a full A-to-B hit in his stunning 2014 Mustang, built by Craig Burns at SCF Race Cars.

It's been six months since the car made a few shakedown hits, and after some teething issues with the torque converter and wastegates, the boys laid down their first full hit at the Santo's Summer Thunder meet at Sydney Dragway in late January. The result? A blistering 5.89-second pass at 253mph.

"Words can't describe the feeling in the car," Campo said. "It's pretty wild."

The car was originally being built for a Mike Moran engine combination, which was sent back to the United States for upgrades. In the interim, a Brad Anderson Hemi with billet Noonan heads popped up on Campo's radar and was purchased as a stop-gap to try and do some racing and testing on the new chassis.

The 514ci Hemi is fitted with a pair of 98mm Garrett turbos and runs on alcohol, with a Waterman Big Bertha fuel pump and Pro Mag 44 ignition controlled by a BigStuff3 ECU.

"The car hasn't been great in the 60-foot," Campo said. "We've only run a flat one-second hit over the 60, but we will work on that and improve. We have made a bunch of changes to the four-link so far, and once we get in the ballpark we will start fine-tuning the shocks.

"Our 5.89 is not a bad starting point," he continued. "We can actually start to do some tuning now; we are only running 50lb of boost, and that's quite conservative. Mike Moran still runs the tune-up and Burnsy does the chassis; I'm just the dummy behind the wheel."

To half-track, the car has run a 3.94, but for it to move into the low fives over the quarter – which is where it has been built to run – the eighth-mile times need to be better than 3.70.

"On a hub dyno we made 3600hp on 50psi, so we know the power is there, especially when we plan to run this combination to 70psi," Campo said. "At this point it's about power management – primarily, getting the power in earlier. We intend to run the next four rounds in the new IHRA Pro Mod class, then after that we will move into the Pro Extreme class. At the moment we are on a big tyre, and one day will consider the move to radial."

So just how quick can this car run?

"I hate putting a number on it, but the record

is a 5.38, held by a car in Bahrain," Campo said. "We want to be quicker than that. We need to sneak up on this; racing today is very different to 10 years ago. Back then I had a big-block in a Cortina with a billet elbow and 120mm throttlebody and thought I was king! Today it's billet blocks, billet heads, $10K for a set of shocks and the same for a converter.

"I'm enjoying it, and will do it as long as I can afford it. We are lucky to have great sponsors with good products, but things are 10 times the price today, so it's often baby steps.

"Our biggest challenge is trying to stop it from shaking the tyres, and we've busted a few sets of wheelie bars so far. If we can get past the shake zone – the first 100 feet – and into a sweet spot, we are good. We don't want to walk it out; that won't run a number. I think 280mph is where we would like to end up."

"THE BOYS LAID DOWN THEIR FIRST FULL HIT AT THE SANTO'S SUMMER THUNDER MEET AT SYDNEY DRAGWAY. THE RESULT? A BLISTERING 5.89-SECOND PASS AT 253MPH"

> ARBY CHAT

BUDGET BULLET

BEST bang-for-buck racer at the moment would have to be Kevin Boulton from Waneroo, WA, whose 1987 Pontiac Firebird has run an impressive 7.40 and 196mph on a 315 radial, powered by a turbocharged big-block Chev with an Eagle crank and Scat rods.

The car came with a pretty basic 572ci big-block Chevy on methanol, and Kev converted it from a full slick to a radial, eventually running an 8.50 aspirated.

A 106mm Precision snail and hot side came up cheap, so Kevin wound the compression back to 11:1, fitted new rings and bearings, and retained the cam. Mike from WA Racing Developments loaned him his MoTeC ECU, did a bunch of fab work, and wired and tuned the deal. Simon from Allfast Torque Converters rebuilt the 'Glide after it was destroyed at the first meeting, and it then made 1470hp at the hubs on just 14psi and 20 degrees of timing.

The car has already run quicker than its tech, so Kev's mates from Performance Towing have shouted him a Race Products floater kit for the rear end, while Chris Mills Performance has also lent ongoing support.

For a low-boost slapper with pretty ordinary gear and a cast-wheel turbo, this thing's a weapon.

SIXES IN SIGHT

AFTER bagging a bunch of trophies at Drag Challenge 2019, Daniel Szabolics continues to push the boundaries in his stunning twin-turbo, big-block Chevy-powered HQ coupe.

He recently took the car to Sydney, where he ran an incredible 7.11sec pass on a 275 radial tyre. The 4100lb heavyweight has already run over 202mph and seems just a few passes away from achieving its goal of a six-second pass.

RB RECORD ATTACK

THE boys from JW Automotive in Ormiston, Queensland, have been turning out some killer cars for some years now, particularly those rocking RB power. Their latest creation, an RB30-powered VL owned by George Josevski, recently ran 7.44@193.88mph on a 255 radial at Willowbank.

The 3.2-litre engine has the best of the best when it comes to RB power, with a custom billet block and crank, GRP rods and an original head ported in-house – not to mention a massive Garrett GTX50 turbo pumping 65psi of boost into the little six-banger. On the dyno, all of that equates to 1700hp at the wheels, with more to come.

"The car has been with us for some time," said JW's Justin Wilkinson. "Over the past few years it's worked through the 10s, into the nines and then the eights, eventually running a high seven with the old motor and a few of the newer bolt-ons for this engine.

"We had our goals planned early; we wanted to have the fastest RB30-powered streeter, and that record of 193mph was owned by the Queen Street Customs boys. Anthony Maatouk has run a 7.34 with a single-cam combination, and we just ran a 193.88 on a 7.44 ET.

"By our usual standards, the car was quite slow in short-track times; we usually run in the high teens in the 60-foot, but with soaring track temperatures we had to settle for a 1.3. The car has run a 4.99@145mph to the eighth, but on this pass it went 154mph, so by the time we get this all strung together we should be able to get it into the 7.20s."

The 3150lb rocket ship is running a Powerglide trans and a MoTeC M130 ECU, all built, tuned and wired in-house. It also has Atomizer racing injectors, and Kyle from 6boost was responsible for the hot side.

"We are looking forward to racing at the Kenda round in Sydney on a 235 radial and dipping into the 7.20s," Justin said.

PHOTOS DAVE REID

> "WE HAD OUR GOALS PLANNED EARLY; WE WANTED TO HAVE THE FASTEST RB30-POWERED STREETER"

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29 FEB Queensland Championships

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29 FEB-01 MAR Westernationals

04 MAR Hour of Power

11 MAR Subaru & Mitsubishi Night

25 MAR Eight-Mile Radial Night

motorplex.com.au

SYDNEY DRAGWAY

28-29 FEB Kenda 660 Drag Radial Series

14 MAR Jamboree

sydneydragway.com.au

Phone (02) 9421 0700

SOUTH COAST RACEWAY

14 MAR Track Championships

southcoastraceway.com.au

STEEL CITY RACEWAY

07-08 MAR Steel City Nats

steelcitydrags.com

HEATHCOTE RACEWAY

21 MAR Street Car Throwdown

heathcoteraceway.com.au

WARWICK DRAGWAY

09 MAR Bracket Meeting

warwickdragway.com

SUNSET STRIP MILDURA

13-14 MAR Sportsman Round 10

sunsetstrip.org.au

READERS' ROCKETS

SEND photos of your car and a few details of what went into the build to Readers' Rockets, *Street Machine,* Locked Bag 12, Oakleigh, Vic 3166 or email readerscars@bauer-media.com.au. Please note: Send us copies of prints as we are unable to return your photos.

STEVE RYAN
1975 HOLDEN LH TORANA

"I HAVE owned my Torana since I was 16 years old – 23 years now! When I bought the car it was Candy Apple Red with a 202 and Aussie four-speed. I rebuilt it with a 253 and flare kit ready for my P-plates; it only required painting. Then I decided to go to a 427ci big-block Chev with a 6/71 blower, Dart Pro 1 heads, 9.8:1 comp, solid-roller cam, SRP pistons, Total Seal rings, Scat rods and a steel crank. It runs on pump 98 and makes 900hp at the flywheel. Behind the mill is a Powerglide and a sheet-metal nine-inch with a 4.11:1 full-spool Strange centre. It's mini-tubbed with coil-over shocks. Brakes are VT Commodore on the front and VN discs on the rear. It's a regularly driven streeter to car shows, and has been used at Powercruise. Massive thanks to my wife Nadine for support over the years." Photos: Steve Kelly

S 31692

JOHN JELINCIC
1972 FORD FAIRMONT

“MY FAIRMONT was bought in Queensland for $1850 as a rolling shell painted Monza Red. In my 27 years of ownership it’s had a lot of changes, as for most of that time it was driven daily as the second family car, with baby seats in the back. It’s now painted Kingfisher Blue and black, with a fibreglass reverse-cowl bonnet from Alfa Motorsport. Paint and panel is not the greatest, but it’s okay from 20 feet away! Up front is a 408 Cleveland stroker with more than 500hp, built by Kris Hodges of Summernats fame. Driveline is a C4 with a 3500rpm stall running to a 3.89:1-geared nine-inch. Wheels are 17-inch American Racing Torq Thrusts, running M&H tyres for the drags or 335 Michelins for the street. I have taken the car to the drags a few times, with a best of 11.7 seconds – quite good considering how mild the engine is and the fact that having no traction bars creates a problem on take-off. I would love a new paintjob, but it doesn’t make it go any faster, so my future plans would include a change of wheels and brakes and more power so I can compete in Drag Challenge at some point.”

SCOTT AUSTIN
1968 HK HOLDEN MONARO

"I HAVE owned this car for 28 years and just completed its latest full rebuild. It was an original two-owner car with only 39,000 miles on the clock when I got it. The Monaro now features a 350 Chev small-block that has been bored 40thou, blueprinted and balanced, with a 600 Holley on top. Gearbox is a two-speed Powerglide with a 3500rpm stall, running back to a 10-bolt Salisbury diff with 3.55:1 gears. The paint is Holden Sting Red and gloss black, and the interior has been custom trimmed in beige vinyl, with all uncovered surfaces painted to match for a cleaner, more modern look. Other features include deleted fuel filler, boot lock and wipers. The engine bay and undercarriage have been smoothed, and the car has been lowered over old-school Dragway wheels."

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> GAG OF THE MONTH

GOOD PROSPECTS

PADDY, an Irish lad, goes to confession. "Forgive me father, for I have sinned," he says.

"Tell me son, what transgressions have you committed?" the priest asks.

"I took liberties with a young lass without being married, Father," Paddy admits.

"Now, Paddy, you tell me who this young lady is," the priest admonishes.

"I'm sorry Father; it would be ungentlemanly of me to divulge her name."

"Was it Mary, the baker's daughter?" the priest asks.

"I'm sorry father," says Paddy, "I just can't say."

"Was it Susan, the publican's daughter?"

"Father, please," Paddy protests. "I don't want to embarrass anyone's daughter."

"Surely then, it must be Colleen, the postmaster's daughter?"

"Father, you can ask and ask, but I refuse to tell," Paddy says.

The priest sighs. "All right then Paddy." He gives Paddy his penance and sends him on his way.

Outside the church, Paddy's mate is waiting for him and asks him how it went.

"Not too bad," says Paddy. "The priest gave me 10 Hail Marys, five Our Fathers and three really good leads."

Con Feshan, email

> FUNNY FOTO

Which came first?

MEDICAL ADVICE

A SWEET old lady telephoned the hospital. "Hello, is it possible to speak to someone who can tell me how a patient is doing?" she asked.

"I'll be glad to help, dear," said the hospital receptionist. What's the name and room number of the patient?"

The old lady, in her weak, tremulous voice, said, "Annie Grey, room 253."

"Sure, let me put you on hold while I check with the nurse's station," said the receptionist.

After a few minutes, the receptionist returned to the phone and said, "I have good news. Her nurse just told me that Annie is doing well. Her blood pressure is fine, her blood work just came back normal and her physician has scheduled her to be discharged tomorrow."

"Oh, that's wonderful," the old lady said. "I was so worried. Thank you so much for the good news, dear."

"You're more than welcome," said the receptionist. "Is Annie your daughter?"

The old lady replied, "No, I'm Annie Grey in room 253. No one tells me shit around here."

Di Agnosis, email

KEEP IT IN THE FAMILY

A FOUR-year-old boy said to his father, "Dad, I've decided to get married."

His father chuckled to himself and replied, "That's wonderful. Do you have a girl in mind?"

"Yes – Grandma!" said the boy. "She said she loves me, I love her too, and she's the best cook and storyteller in the whole world!"

"Well, that's nice," said his father, "but we have a small problem."

"What's that?" the boy asked.

"Well, Grandma is my mother. How can you marry my mother?"

The little boy replied: "Why not? You married mine!"

I Theewed, email

UNITED NATIONS

AN AFGHAN, an Albanian, an Algerian, an American, an Angolan, an Antiguan, an Argentine, an Armenian, an Australian, an Austrian, a Bahamian, a Bangladeshi, a Belarusian, a Belgian, a Bolivian, a Bosnian, a Brazilian, a Brit, a Bulgarian, a Burmese, a Burundian, a Cambodian, a Cameroonian, a Canadian, a Central African, a Chadian, a Chilean, a Chinese, a Colombian, a Congolese, a Costa Rican, a Croatian, a Cuban, a Cypriot, a Czech, a Dane, a Djibouti, a Dominican, a Dutchman, an East Timorese, an Ecuadorean, an Egyptian, an Equatorial Guinean, an Eritrean, an Estonian, an Ethiopian, a Fijian, a Filipino, a Finn, a Frenchman, a Gabonese, a Gambian, a Georgian, a German, a Greek, a Grenadian, a Guatemalan, a Guinean, a Guyanese, a Haitian, a Herzegovinian, a Honduran, a Hungarian, an Icelander, an Indian, an Indonesian, an Iranian, an Iraqi, an Irishman, an Israeli, an Italian, an Ivorian, a Jamaican, a Japanese, a Jordanian, a Kazakhstani, a Kenyan, a Kuwaiti, a Kyrgyz, a Laotian, a Latvian, a Lebanese, a Liberian, a Libyan, a Liechtensteiner, a Lithuanian, a Luxembourger, a Macedonian, a Malawian, a Malaysian, a Maldivan, a Malian, a Maltese, a Marshallese, a Mauritanian, a Mauritian, a Mexican, a Micronesian, a Moldovan, a Monacan, a Mongolian, a Moroccan, a Mosotho, a Motswana, a Mozambican, a Namibian, a Nauruan, a Nepalese, a New Zealander, a Nicaraguan, a Nigerian, a North Korean, a Northern Irishman, a Norwegian, an Omani, a Pakistani, a Palauan, a Palestinian, a Panamanian, a Papua New Guinean, a Paraguayan, a Peruvian, a Pole, a Portuguese, a Qatari, a Romanian, a Russian, a Rwandan, a Saint Lucian, a Salvadoran, a Samoan, a San Marinese, a Sao Tomean, a Saudi, a Scot, a Senegalese, a Serbian, a Seychellois, a Sierra Leonean, a Singaporean, a Slovakian, a Slovenian, a Solomon Islander, a Somali, a South African, a South Korean, a Spaniard, a Sri Lankan, a Sudanese, a Surinamer, a Swazi, a Swede, a Swiss, a Syrian, a Taiwanese, a Tajik, a Tanzanian, a Togolese, a Tongan, a Trinidadian or Tobagonian, a Tunisian, a Turkish, a Tuvaluan, a Ugandan, a Ukrainian, a Uruguayan, an Uzbekistani, a Venezuelan, a Vietnamese, a Welshman, a Yemenite, a Zambian and a Zimbabwean all go out to a nightclub.

The doorman stops them and says: "Sorry, I can't let you in without a Thai."

D Resscode, email

> THOUGHT OF THE MONTH

Everyone is entitled to my opinion – Madonna

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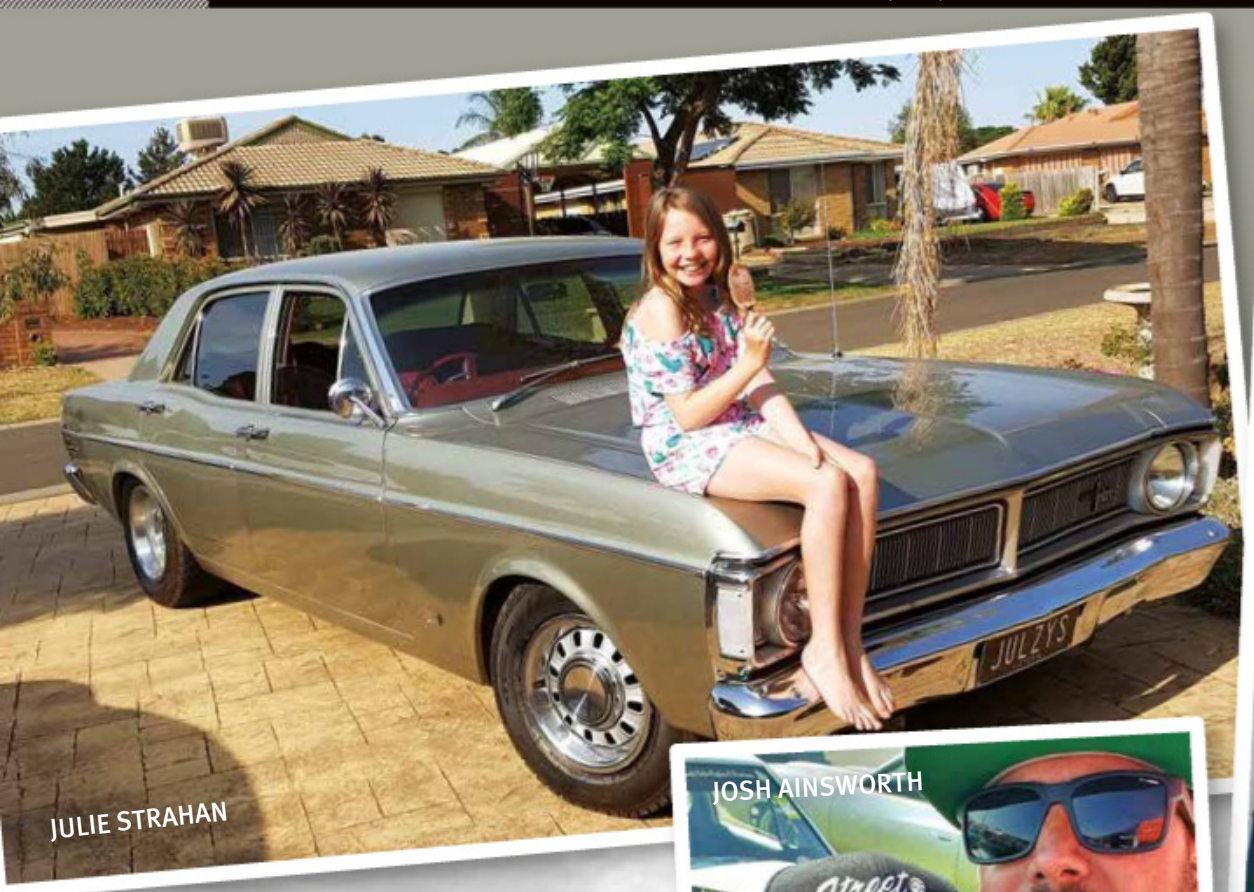
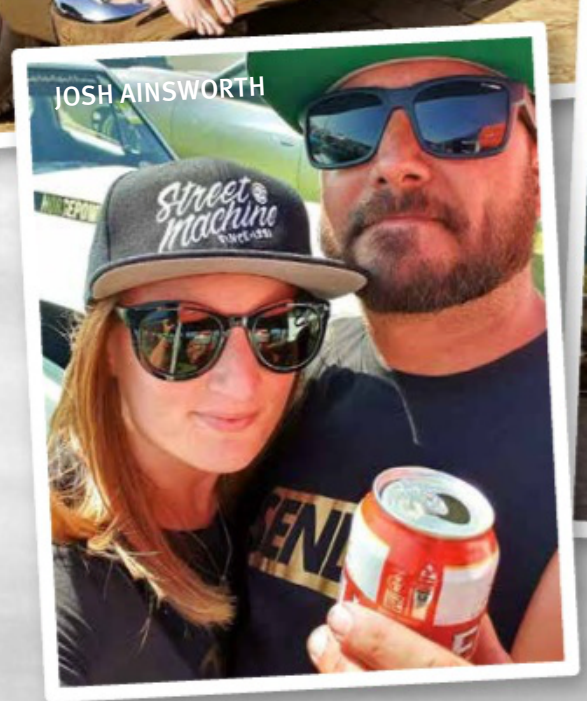


JULIE STRAHAN



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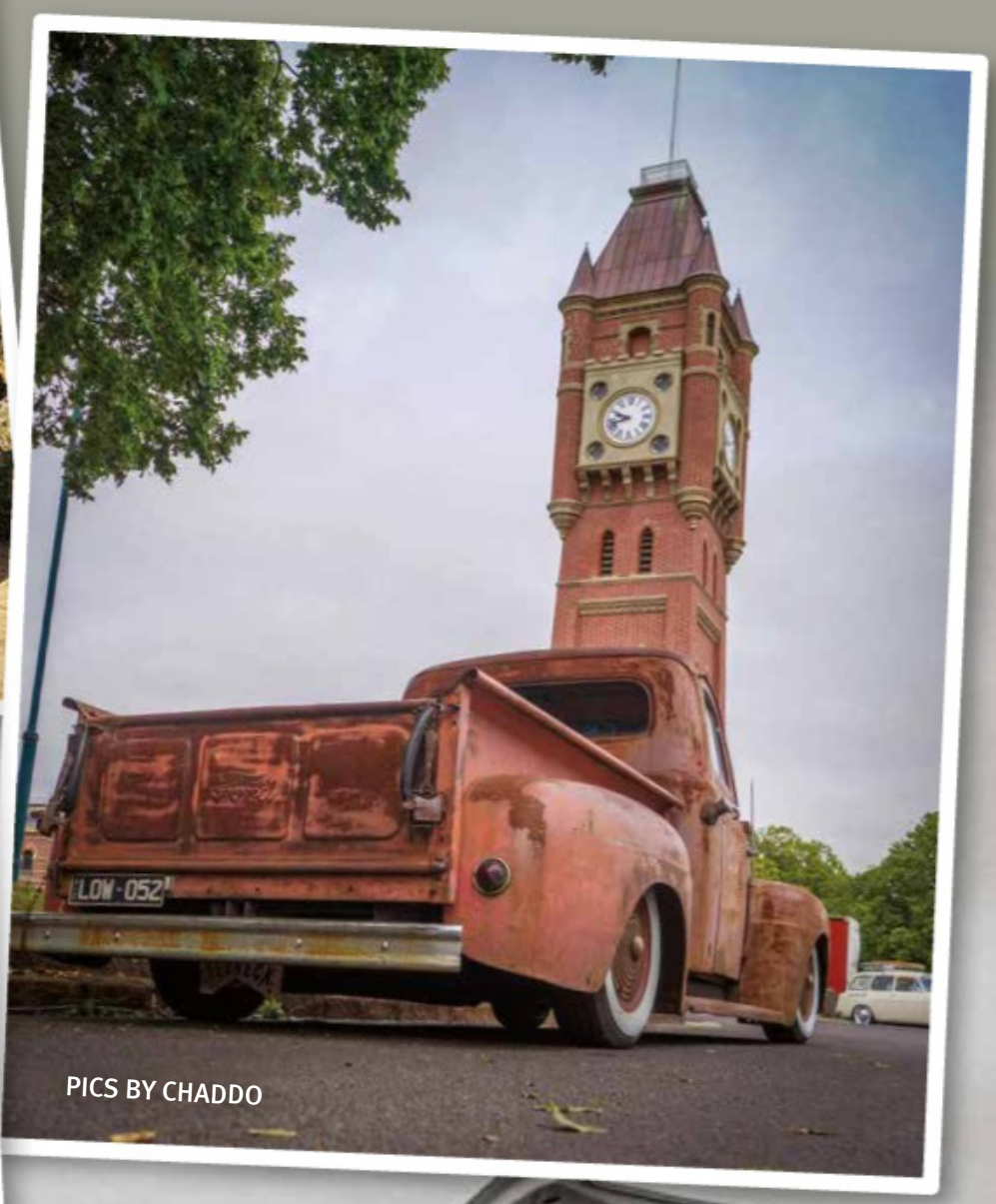

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ELMORE

STORY IAIN KELLY PHOTOS MATTHEW EVERINGHAM

427CI WHIPPLE-BLOWN WINDSOR

> WESTEND PERFORMANCE, CAMPBELLTOWN, NSW

NO FLASH IN THE PAN

“BECAUSE the engine was going into a Capri, we couldn’t get an oil pan from the USA, so we used a more stock-style one,” Sam says. “We used all off-the-shelf parts in this build; there isn’t anything crazy in terms of custom-made parts.”

WHAT a golden age of horsepower we’re currently enjoying! Take this Westend Performance-built 427ci Windsor, for example: it makes 1170hp at the crank and 950 at the tyres. That sort of grunt used to require a laundry list of custom-engineered components, but today it can be achieved with off-the-shelf parts and pump fuel!

“There isn’t anything exotic in this motor,” says Westend Performance bossman Sam Fenech. “My customer told me he wanted a blown small-block Ford for his Capri street car, then gave me complete freedom to build it however I wanted. That is pretty rare to be able to have complete creative control over a build, so it was really cool.”

It kicked off with an aftermarket Dart block stuffed with a Callies crank and Callies rods, 9.5:1-compression JE pistons and a mechanical roller cam. Sitting on top of the 427ci bottom end are a pair of AFR 225cc heads housing T&D rockers and upgraded valve springs. A Holley HP ECU controls the show.

“Because Windsors are difficult to find good manifolds for, we bought a Holley Hi-Ram for a 351 Windsor and modified it,” Sam explains. “This gave us 16 injectors: eight Siemens 80lb injectors above the blower and another eight 80lb injectors in the ports. We used twin fuel pressure regulators on the dyno, so we boost-referenced the eight injectors below the blower.”

That blower is one serious pump: a Whipple 510R twin-screw pushing 16psi into the seven-litre small-block. Sam reckons there is more in it, especially with the pump E85 fuel being so boost-friendly.

“If someone says they want 1000hp, I tell them to go Whipple,” says Sam. “You can drive a Whipple on the street and not have the intake air temp issues you get with a traditional Roots blower. You don’t have to spin a Whipple as hard, and they say it’s the equivalent of a 14/71 but physically the size of an 8/71. If an 8/71 makes 800hp on pump fuel, a Whipple will make 1000hp. If you keep pushing them the Whipple will make more power.”

The Windsor isn’t all about brute force though; it is a seriously good-looking bit of kit thanks to liberal black powdercoating, including the first pair of Windsor valve covers that Shaun’s Custom Alloy has made.

“A couple of cool points on this motor include the EFI and the Smart Coil kit, which uses coil-on-plug technology like a new car,” says Sam. “For the crank trigger, we fitted a Holley hall-effect sensor kit and used a cam position sensor in place of the distributor.

“We spun it up to 7000rpm and it was heading for the sky,” Sam laughs. “We took it to 6500rpm on the hub dyno and the customer said, ‘That’s enough!’ He didn’t know how he was going to use that much power anyway.”

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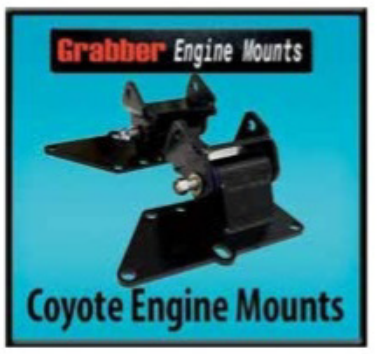

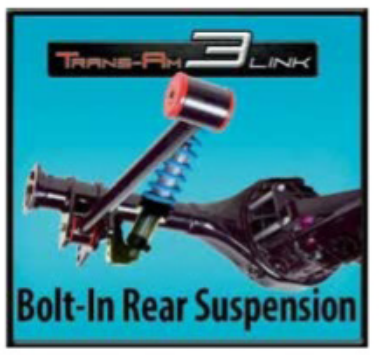

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