

FORD 100 55 PICK-UP

Yeah—It's Got a Hemi in It!

This truck was found at a swap meet in Dallas, Texas. It started life as a California Highway Department truck and was sold in the 60s. It underwent a mild buildup with a '65 Corvette 327 engine backed by a 350 turbo. The truck was still complete, so I negotiated a deal to make it mine!

I stored the truck for about two years before deciding to turn it into a nice street rod driver. After pulling it a part, I found rust in all the usual places along with evidence that it had been hit in the right front. It was still a good truck to rebuild. The entire truck was blasted, and patch panels were installed then shot with primer.

I put in a Heidt's front suspension and leaf spring kit from No-Limit for the 9" Ford rear with 3:50 gears. Sway bars were added to both ends for improved handling. The normal 11" front disc and rear drum brakes stop the pickup. A '93 LT1 Corvette engine from Street and Performance was installed for good power and economy. The cab and all the body parts were delivered to SAF Inc. located in Mena,



Article by Tony Squier
Pictures by Chuck Belew







Arkansas, to be smoothed and painted with Orion Silver from the House of Kolor.

It was at this point that the whole plan went in a new direction. I own Squier Inc., a wire shop that builds engine harnesses for fuel-injected engines in support of Street and Performance. Mark Campbell of Street and Performance asked me to design and build a harness for the new Dodge Magnum Hemi 5.7L V8. After the harness was done, it became obvious that we needed a vehicle to test everything. This Ford F-100 pickup got the opportunity to become the first custom truck to be powered by the new Hemi.

I removed the LT1 and took the truck back to Walt at SAF, Inc. Designing a custom vehicle after it had been painted is not an easy task, but with Walt's expertise and advice we made it happen. The Hemi was placed in the GM mounts by using adapter plates designed by Walt. The headers were designed by Street and Performance, and they also supplied the engine accessories.



Next the truck went to CAR Upholstery in Tulsa, Oklahoma, to get the new interior. Chuck from CAR did the complete custom interior, even before the front sheet metal was installed. He had to imagine how the truck would look finished with very little to go on.

We brought the truck back to our shop to bolt on the front sheet metal and add the chassis harness. We designed and installed our own system for the electrical needs. I had a great deal of help from my crew, Jim Bailey and Nick Long.

The engine harness presented the biggest problem for this project since the new Hemi is a high-tech engine with dual spark plugs per cylinder and a drive-by wire throttle system. We wouldn't have succeeded on the engine harness without the support and technical assistance given by Glenn Forshee and Mike Goers from the Jeep Division at DaimlerChrysler Corp. They were great to work with, and I appreciated them very much.

After entering the truck in a few car shows I realized how much interest and excitement this engine generated. Because of the vision and knowledge from people like Mark Campbell and Glenn Forshee, this hobby continues to advance utilizing the new technology coming out of Detroit.

A lot of special support was also given by local retailers to make this happen: CarQuest, Bumper to Bumper, Southern Autos, Miners A&B Tires, and Bob Carver's Dodge Dealer.

Now that the truck is completed, it has turned out to be more than I could have expected. The Hemi surely does run smoothly, and it doesn't have any problems if I need to pass another car. The surprise looks and conversations that I've had about this setup have been both fun and interesting.



1955 Ford F-100 Pickup Tony Squier Mena, AR



COLOR: Orion Silver; House of Kolor

ENGINE: Dodge 5.7 Liter Hemi; 345 horsepower; crate engine; stock rotating assembly; aluminum pistons; aluminum cylinder heads; factory Dodge fuel injection; custom-built headers by Street and Performance; 2 1/2" stainless steel exhaust pipes; 4" Turbo stainless mufflers

DRIVETRAIN: Original chassis; C-ed rear; boxed; Heidt's Mustang II IFS; Monroe gas shocks, front and rear; No-Limit rear suspension and sway bars; front disc brakes; rear drum brakes; Dodge five-speed automatic transmission; Ford 9" differential with a 3:50 gear ratio

BODY: All-steel body; fiberglass rear fenders; bodywork by owner and Walt Solo from SAF Inc; in Mena, AR; painted by Dustin Jacques from SAF Inc.

INTERIOR: Classic instruments; Vintage Air heating and cooling unit; Lecarra steering wheel; original front seat; gray Ultra leather interior by Chuck Rowland

WHEELS AND TIRES: American Racing Torq-Thrust II wheels, 16"x8" fronts and 17"x7 1/2" rears; Cooper Discoverer H/T radial tires, 225/70R16" fronts and 275/60R17" rears

