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**Real Cars, Real Tests, And  
Real Results Amid The Rubble**



By John Pearley Huffman

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**MOST OF US OWN EXACTLY one (1) car that has to commute, cruise, travel, race and do-it-all reliably. We own exactly one (1) "real street" car.**

CC gathered a harvest of real street cars for Real Street Eliminator VI (RSE) at the Fairplex in Pomona, California. Cars for all the mundane and extraordinary things car guys do. Cars built under the pressure of a mortal budget.

Eleven cars were invited but tragically, Mark Dalquist's '67 Riviera was consumed by an engine fire before making it out of Minnesota, leaving 10.

It was the largest, most diverse field ever. "Traditional" street machines were Lynn Mosmeyer's Texas small-block '55 Chevy, Erik Bergren's big-block '70 Chevelle, Chris Rentas' bigger-block '70 Camaro, and Rick Blowers' all-Olds all-the-way-from-Missouri '72 Cutlass. "High Tech" was covered by Ken Zeller's supercharged '86 Corvette, Don Sanford's AWD Kenne-Bell-equipped '91 Syclone, and Leon Li's '88 Supra Turbo. "Contemporary Muscle" was shown by these Eighties terrors, Chris Myrhe's '89 Mustang and Adi Mudaliar's Canadian '87 Grand National. Blair Smith's '58 Ford was our "Cruiser."

This year, every car ran one set of tires during the tests. The exhaust had to be legal and all normal street equipment (lights, horn, turn signals, etc.) in place. Every car had to show current registration and be modified by its owner. RSE is for guys who drive what they build.

Incredibly generously, BFGoodrich supplied the field with tires. Every car could start the event on new rubber, and no one would have the advantage of some super exotic, DOT-approved (wink, nudge, say no more), shaved gumballs. How better to equalize things than quality BFG Comp and Radial T/As?



PHOTOS BY RANDY LORENTZEN AND THE CC STAFF





## Scoring

With such a range of cars, it is folly to compare them. Welcome to folly.

The competition was in six categories: Acceleration (100 points), Slalom (75 points), Braking (50 points), Fuel Economy (25 points), Ride & Drive (100 points), and Craftsmanship (150 points).

In the first four categories, the best performing vehicle received maximum points. The other scores were a percentage of the best car's performance. If the fastest car turned a 12.00 e.t., it scored 100 points, and a 14.00 e.t. would earn another car 85.71 points ( $12.00 \div 14.00 \times 100$ ). If the best car got 20 mpg it would receive 25 points, and a car getting 8 mpg would only receive 10 ( $8 \div 20 \times 25$ ).

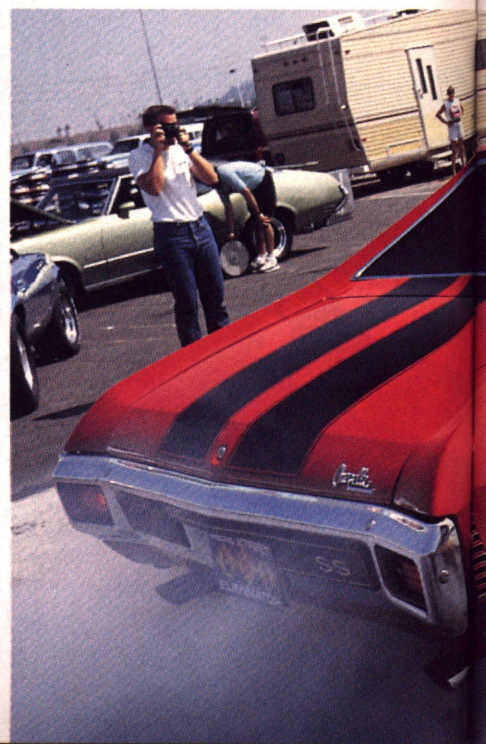
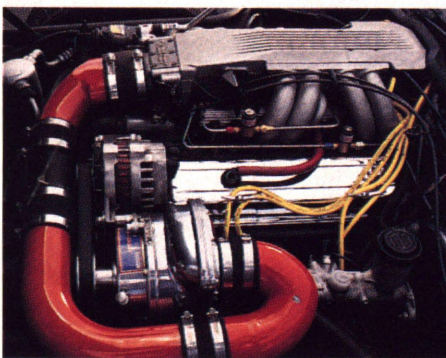
The objective scoring, except for the fuel economy, was done on Day One at the Fairplex. Acceleration and braking test driving was done by CC contributor C. Van Tune on the Fairplex's untreated, and rather slow, dragstrip. Acceleration and braking were calculated using CC's fifth-wheel.

The slalom driver was *Motor Trend* Road Test Editor and road racer Mac DeMere. The slalom course was a straight line with six cones spaced 100 feet apart. The fastest time won.

Fuel economy was determined during Day Two's Ride & Drive, using the odometer in the Chevrolet Astro AWD pace van to calculate consumption.

The objective measures were worth 250 of the 500 available points. Of equal importance was subjective testing conducted the next day, reflecting the collective opinion of six judges: CC Editor John Baechtel, CC Associate Editor Chuck Schifsky, CC contributor C. Van Tune, CC Special Projects Manager Michael Johnson, *Mustang & Fords* Editor (and former CC staffer) Jerry Pitt, and High Performance Group Associate Editor Erik Falconer.

The most points (150) were at stake for Craftsmanship. The judges assessed each car's fit and finish, drivetrain quality, creativity, integration, and the level of modifications. This category also lev-







els the playing field; a '55 Chevy may not do well on the slalom, but could score big points for all the details and work.

The Ride & Drive (100 points) was 127.9 miles along city boulevards, mountain roads, rural byways, suburban streets, and freeways at legal speeds paced by the Chevy Astro (neat van, go buy one). Each judge drove each car about 10 miles, concentrating on practicality, comfort, and dependability. Dependability can be tough—the route climbed more than 5000 feet on a muggy summer day and some cars overheated.

The numbers were crunched and we came up with a winner.

#### **Acceleration** (100 points)

Speed is what has mattered most to car guys through 100-plus years of car guy stuff. All acceleration scores are based strictly on quarter-mile e.t.s.

There are "street" cars that will run 8's, albeit on slicks with a drag racing suspension, open exhausts, and a motor with a 3000rpm idle. But few cars on realistically sized street radials with a real world suspension, corked, and a livable engine, will break into the 11's. Most hard-running street cars, and RSE competitors, run in the 13's.

Aided by a shot of nitrous, Chris Myrhe's Mustang was at the top of the 13-second group, running a well-controlled 13.45 @ 107.81 mph. The launch technique was gentle to not overwhelm the tires, but its high trap speed indicates the nitrous push at run's end.

Right behind the Mustang was Ken Zeller's Corvette running 13.51 @ 102.65 mph. We expected more from a supercharged Corvette *with* nitrous. An air intake over the hot headers and an unfortunate air route from the blower to the intake, kept the car from performing anywhere near expectation.

Also running 13's was the GN, Chevelle, Camaro, Supra, and Syclone. The Chevelle and Camaro couldn't hook their low-end torque effectively, while the Supra's weight and meager displacement made it difficult to launch.





The best Syclyne launches were achieved by torque-loading against its emergency brake, which produced ultra-quick 0-30 and 0-60 times. Its AWD system ensured it was the only vehicle not traction-limited. Unfortunately, and surprisingly for a turbo, it pooped out on the top end—limited by gear ratio, aerodynamics, and drivetrain friction.

The Cutlass and '58 Ford, both limited by generous girth and mild powerplants, finished significantly behind.

The winner, the incredibly quick '55, left us in a dilemma. Its nitrous-addicted 406 small-block is the sort of engine the Italians write operas about, the English build navies to protect, the French hold feasts to celebrate, and the Germans invade neighbors to possess. But its ignition sends out blinding RF interference. The fifth-wheel's computer couldn't overcome that and upchucked. With no timing lights, we were forced to extrapolate. Yeah, that's it: "Extrapolate."

Using our driver's experience, the fifth-wheel's abbreviated data, and a series of timing slips provided by owner Lynn Mosmeyer, we have no doubt the car was running *at least* an 11.70. So the Bel Air was awarded the 100 points and the other scores were based on the very conservative 11.70 estimate of its run. It's about all we could do considering the circumstances and it's fair.

#### Acceleration (100 Points)

Car	E.T.	(Points)
1955 Bel Air	11.70 @ 110.00 mph*	(100.00)
1989 Mustang	13.45 @ 107.81 mph	(86.99)
1986 Corvette	13.51 @ 102.65 mph	(86.60)
1987 Grand National	13.55 @ 106.42 mph	(86.35)
1991 Syclyne	13.63 @ 96.26 mph	(85.84)
1970 Chevelle	13.77 @ 102.51 mph	(84.97)
1970 Camaro	13.79 @ 100.69 mph	(84.84)
1988 Supra	13.87 @ 105.05 mph	(84.35)
1972 Cutlass	14.66 @ 96.80 mph	(79.81)
1958 Ford	15.90 @ 87.81 mph	(73.59)

\*Estimated

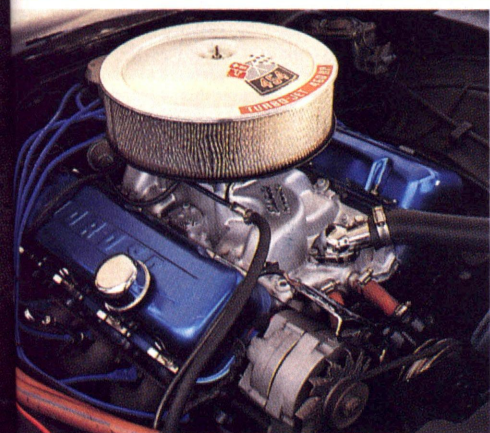
#### Braking (50 points)

The braking tests held few surprises with ABS-equipped cars dominating.

Late-model Corvette four-wheel-disc ABS brakes are simply the best, and







Ken Zeller's are the quickest stoppers we've tested. Zeller's Corvette hauled down from 60 in a phenomenal 110 feet. As well as they did here, they betrayed the car during the Ride & Drive.

Behind the Corvette were the other two ABS vehicles, the Syclone and Supra. The Syclone's better-than-stock distance was attributed to the improved load transfer of its lowered suspension, while the Supra was helped by the large contact patches of its 17-inch tires.

The non-ABSers performed progressively worse the older they were—culminating in the "same day" 180-foot taken by that speed demon, the '55.

#### Braking (50 Points)

Car	Distance	(Points)
1986 Corvette	110 feet	(50.00)
1991 Syclone	128 feet	(42.97)
1988 Supra	134 feet	(41.04)
1987 Grand National	142 feet	(38.73)
1989 Mustang	144 feet	(38.19)
1972 Cutlass	146 feet	(37.67)
1970 Camaro	149 feet	(36.91)
1970 Chevelle	152 feet	(36.18)
1958 Ford	176 feet	(31.25)
1955 Bel Air	180 feet	(30.56)

#### Slalom (75 points)

The competitors were familiar with the dragstrip, but none had done the slalom.

The slalom is a good measure of a car's ability to recover from one corner in time to perform another. More than







anything, it rewards balance; that point between a car pushing its nose (understeer) and swinging its tail (oversteer).

Leon Li's Supra rocketed through at 66.09 mph, only 0.11mph better than Adi Mudaliar's GN, but good enough for first. Stock Supras are slalom pigs, with their large mass teetering on modest tires. Leon's lowering, huge rubber, and thick anti-roll bars changed that. The GN starts as a better slalomer and Adi's suspension tweaks paid off.

The Syclone, like a post-menopausal broodmare, plowed. Its AWD enabled the truck to power its way through immense understeer. The Corvette went through wagging its tail like a puppy, the normal Corvette slalom attitude, finishing just behind the Syclone and just ahead of Rick Blowers' Cutlass. The Cutlass had the sensation of infinite grip, equipped as it was with most of the same H-O Racing suspension that made Ken Crocie's '64 GTO so effective against the ZR-1 ("Old Goat New Tricks" CC, 9/92), but was stymied by slow and sloppy steering.

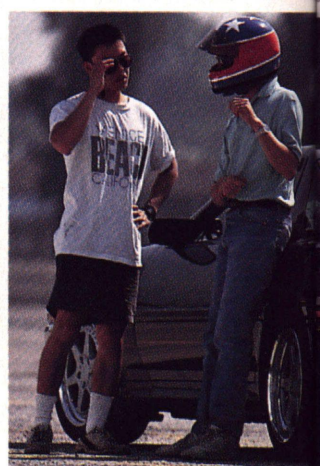
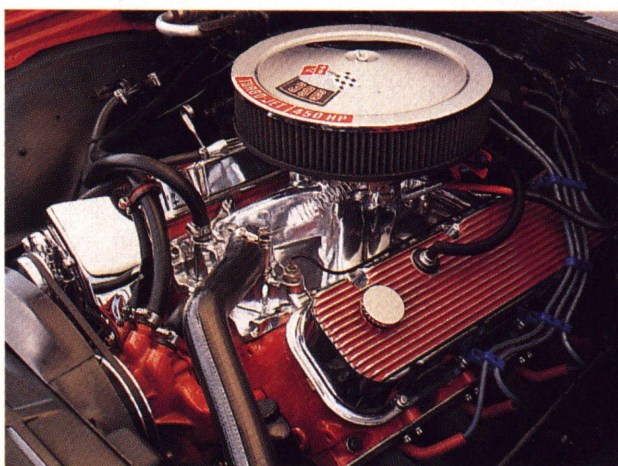
The Camaro, Chevelle, and Bel Air just weren't built for the slalom and were not happy doing it. The '58 Ford was downright miserable—and more fun. With massive amounts of body roll, sluggish manual steering, a huge thin steering wheel, and a slick bench seat, the Ford was a major drama. It was a hairy, scary, and testosterone-packed thrill machine, even if it was slow.

#### Slalom (75 Points)

Car	Speed	(Points)
1988 Supra	66.09 mph	(75.00)
1987 Grand National	65.98 mph	(74.88)
1991 Syclone	65.67 mph	(74.52)
1986 Corvette	65.04 mph	(73.81)
1972 Cutlass	63.82 mph	(72.42)
1989 Mustang	63.72 mph	(72.31)
1970 Camaro	58.69 mph	(66.60)
1970 Chevelle	55.65 mph	(63.15)
1955 Bel Air	51.72 mph	(58.69)
1958 Ford	49.89 mph	(56.61)

#### Fuel Economy (25 points)

Each car was filled at the 127.9-mile Ride & Drive's start and end. The amount it took to fill the car that second







### Objective Scoring Point Totals (Best score in bold)

Car	Accel	Brake	Slalom	Mile	Total
1986 Corvette	86.60	<b>50.00</b>	73.81	<b>25.00</b>	<b>235.41</b>
1988 Supra	84.35	41.04	<b>75.00</b>	24.27	224.66
1987 Grand National	86.35	38.73	74.88	22.94	222.90
1991 Syclone	85.84	42.97	74.52	19.25	222.58
1989 Mustang	86.99	38.19	72.31	23.59	221.08
1972 Cutlass	79.81	37.67	72.42	14.08	203.98
1970 Camaro	84.84	36.91	66.60	14.08	202.43
1955 Bel Air	<b>100.00</b>	30.56	58.69	8.91	198.16
1970 Chevelle	84.97	36.18	63.15	12.49	196.79
1958 Ford	73.59	31.25	56.61	DNF	161.45

time was used to calculate mileage.

Using its Doug Nash 4+3 overdrive transmission and 8.3:1 compression to advantage, the Corvette proved the most economical and returned over 19 mpg. Not surprisingly, since its engine displaces only 3 liters, the Supra was next, followed by the Mustang, GN, and Syclone. As long as drivers stayed out of boost on the turbos, fuel economy soared.

The big engine cars never stood a chance. Worst overall went to the '55; an abysmal 6.80 mpg. That's the price for having an 11-second street car.

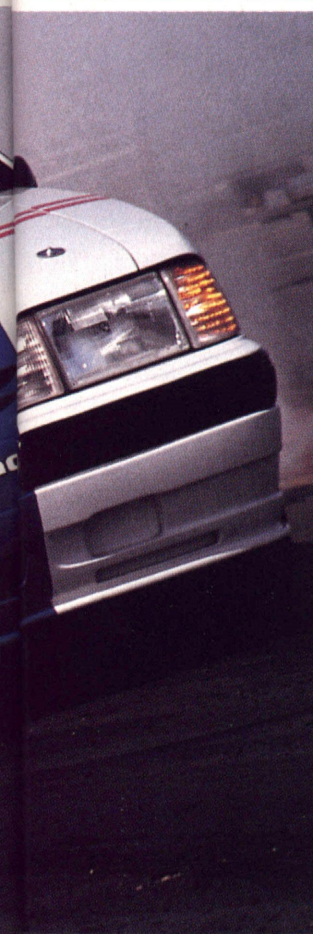
From here on out, we offer opinions.

### Fuel Economy (25 Points)

Car	Fuel Mileage	(Points)
1986 Corvette	19.09 mpg	(25.00)
1988 Supra	18.53 mpg	(24.27)
1989 Mustang	18.01 mpg	(23.59)
1987 Grand National	17.52 mpg	(22.94)
1991 Syclone	14.70 mpg	(19.25)
1972 Cutlass	10.75 mpg	(14.08)
1970 Camaro	10.75 mpg	(14.08)
1970 Chevelle	9.54 mpg	(12.49)
1955 Bel Air	6.80 mpg	(8.91)
1958 Ford	DNF	(0.00)

### Craftsmanship

This was the single most important competition and the most points went to Chris Myrhe's '89 Mustang. What struck the judges wasn't an endless array of high-buck parts, but the detailing of every component. This is a no-buck, high-effort automobile; a car whose owner has invested more sweat and







thought than green into its construction.

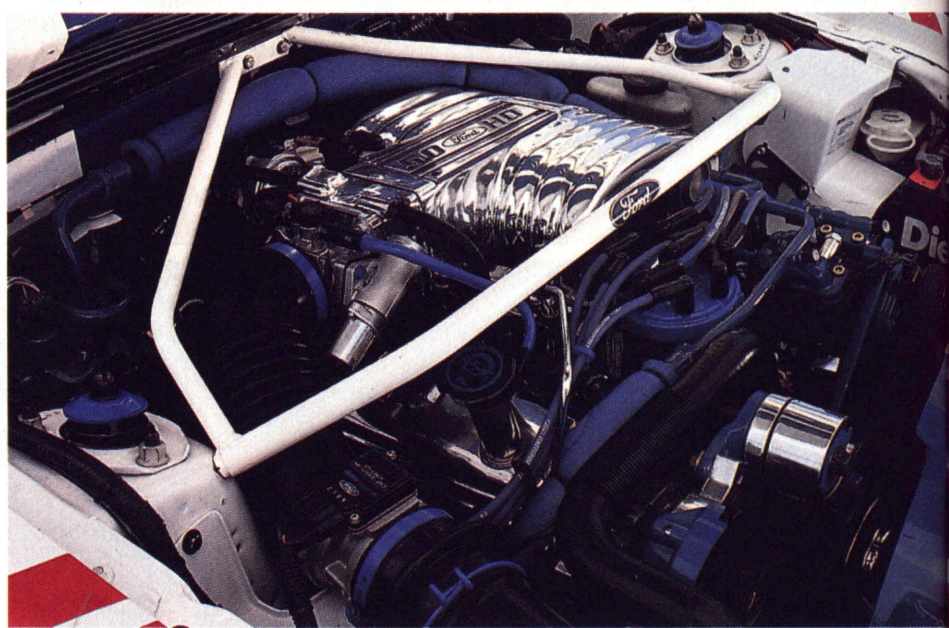
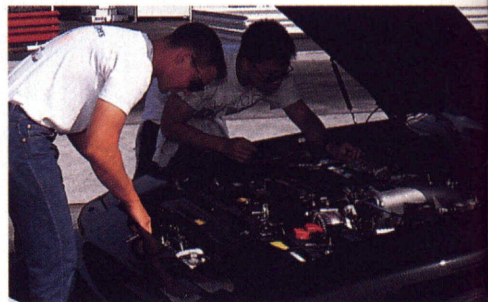
Among the details that impressed the judges were the way the blue stripes on the hood of the car continued not just on both sides of the hood, but through the radiator shroud and up along the fire-wall. In order to do that, Chris must have pulled the engine.

While most of the engine components are stock, each was removed and either painted or polished for visual effect. Also, the A/C system used blue hoses to go with the car's theme and the nitrous bottle mount was singled out for compliments. The aftermarket body kit used on the exterior was not only well-integrated into the car, but had been optimized to fit well too. And the simple Center Line wheels were perfect for this car.

Though everyone admired the effort in Chris's Mustang, some thought it may be overdone. One less set of stripes and losing that ball at the tip of the radio antenna would have been better.

Right behind the Mustang came Leon Li's Supra. While it doesn't have near the Mustang's detail, every aftermarket component was perfect in the car, and each component was top quality.

The Supra was bolt-on madness, as one judge noted, "The more turbo toys the better," and another quipped, "He trusted HKS to the nth degree." Since the car came turbocharged, some judges







would have preferred more intense engine modifications including nitrous, polishing components, blueprinting the cylinder heads, and re-camming.

The suspension, which included Eibach springs, TRD shocks, and HRE anti-roll bars, was praised for its invisibility and effectiveness, and the Stern Face 1 17-inch wheels looked supremely bitchin'. Inside, everyone with a butt loathed the narrow Sparco Monza seat. Leon said the seat was "fine for him" but that didn't cut it with our wide-bodies.

Classic musclecar stuff made everyone slobber over Erik Bergren's Chevelle. The judges found the car "very clean and thankfully so. Overkill is easy and Erik has shown great restraint keeping it looking so stock."

Erik's car started as a 396, so its 0.60-over 427 is a transplant. The detailed engine has neat touches, including under-driven pulleys, and the 3-inch exhaust made the best sounds of the competition. Inside, the dash was nicely covered, the aftermarket radio well-integrated, the LeCarra steering wheel in character, and the tach nicely mounted. Unfortunately, the trunk wasn't finished. Even with its flaws, everyone wanted this car.

Ken Zeller's Corvette looked stock on the outside. Except for the driving lights in the license plate well, it is stock, but was full of other changes. As one judge noted "Stock outside, race under hood." The inside is stock, except for the addition of necessary monitoring gauges. Stock Corvette is still good.

Ken's L98 350 is full of his modifications. He redesigned the Paxton blower's intake plumbing, installed a set of "exempted" Air Flow Research heads, and relocated the alternator for clearance. Ken's engine is impressive, except the air intake is right over the left header, which means the engine sucks in nothing but boiling hot air—not good.

The Cyclone and Grand National both gained points for their modifications, but both were essentially stock appearing, nearly new, vehicles. Their close finish to

## 1958 Ford Custom 300

**Blair Smith**  
Orange, California

Nobody would expect a '58 Ford Custom 300 to perform like a Corvette or late-model Mustang, or even a '70 Chevelle. But Blair Smith's '58 was just too cool not to be included in the comparison.

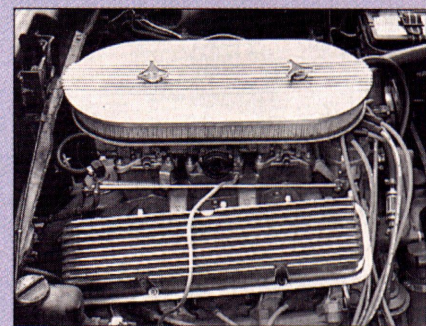
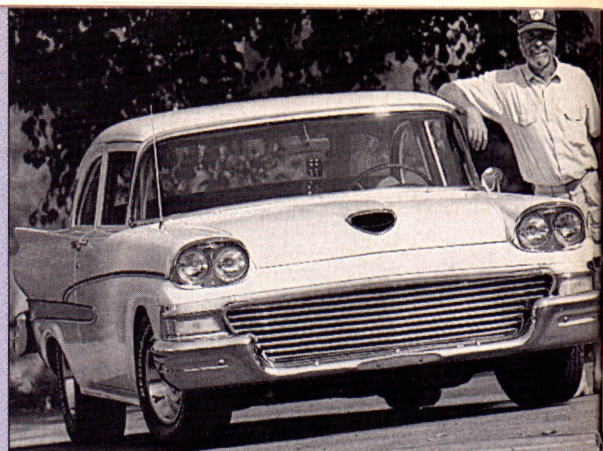
Powered by a mild '63 390 FE engine crowned by a factory tri-power setup, the car didn't promise to be a rocket, but did have the potential to do everything with style. The car came from Ford with a six and Blair knew the 390 was a direct bolt-in. He did the body work himself while taking an auto body class and David Lee stitched the interior as part of his schooling.

During testing, the '58 performed like a 34-year-old car. The acceleration wasn't great, the braking distance long, and the slalom entertaining. With infinite dollars, the car could perform like a Ruf Porsche, but that's not the point. This is a simple, neat, old car that's about perfect for any cruise night anywhere on this planet.

### Specifications

General	
Wheelbase (in.)	116.03
Track f/r (in.)	59.0/56.4
Length (in.)	202.0
Weight (lb.)	3600 (appx.)
Tires	BFGoodrich Radial T/A F: P205/70R14 R: P235/70R14

Drivetrain	
Engine	Pushrod Cast-Iron V8
Displacement (ci)	396
Compression Ratio	10:1
Horsepower	400
Torque (lbs.-ft.)	460
Transmission	Toploader 4-speed
Rearend Ratio	3.70:1



## 1970 Chevrolet Camaro Z/28

**Chris Rentas**  
Huntington Beach, California

A quote from Chris Rentas' letter entering RSE: "This car is no trailer queen and is definitely a runner." OK Chris, then why did it show up for the event on... a trailer?

How it arrived is inconsequential. How it performed is admirable considering its zero budget. Chris built the car for only \$6000, using every recycling resource and tech tip he could find.

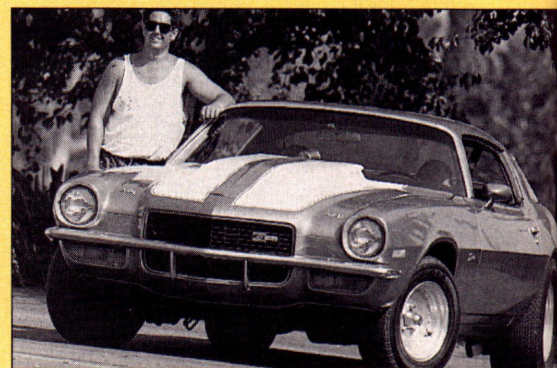
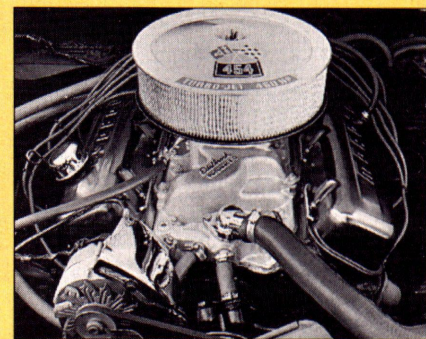
With 468 cubic inches of "all throttle, no bottle" Holley-carbed Rat under its hood, it was the "one set of tires" rules that slowed it to a 13.79 e.t.

Also keeping the car from performing was a lack of completeness. Chris's Camaro isn't fully tweaked, it's a Camaro with a big engine. In any measured category, it finished no better than seventh. In Craftsmanship, the judges appreciated its low-buck nature, but couldn't avoid its wavy fiberglass hood and inconsistent paint. In Ride & Drive it did the unpardonable: it overheated.

### Specifications

General	
Wheelbase (in.)	108.0
Track f/r (in.)	61.3/60.0
Length (in.)	188.0
Weight (lb.)	3500 (appx.)
Tires	BFGoodrich Radial T/A F: P265/50R15 R: P295/50R15

Drivetrain	
Engine	Pushrod Cast-Iron V8
Displacement (ci)	468
Compression Ratio	N/A
Horsepower	500 @ 5200 rpm
Torque (lbs.-ft.)	500 @ 4200 rpm
Transmission	TH400 3-speed automatic
Rearend Ratio	3.73:1





## 1955 Chevrolet Bel Air

**Lynn Mosmeyer**

Floresville, Texas

The old guys at CC adore Shoebox Chevys. The Executive Publisher owns one, the Special Projects Manager has the nicest '57 on the planet, and the Editor practically squirts thinking about Tom Schauppner's '56 ("Most Excellent" CC, 8/92). We had to include a Shoebox in RSE.

Lynn Mosmeyer's '55 is simple, basic, bitchin', and wickedly, wickedly, wickedly to infinity, fast. Lynn's uncle-in-law bought the car new and always garaged it. Lynn acquired the essentially all-stock '55 with 95,000 pampered miles and no visible deterioration in July 1985, just two years before the garage it had lived in all those years was blown away in one of those mobile home-clearing tornadoes that plague the plains states.

Beneath the all-original bodywork lives a beast: 406 cubic inches of majorly nasty small-block. Despite an all-day duration cam and an 11.8:1 compression ratio, it was amazingly driveable. And with the N.O.S. Cheater engaged, blindingly powerful. A 12-bolt rearend, Nova front disc brakes, and a set of 15-inch Rally wheels don't cover all the modifications, but it does cover most of them. This is a simple, low-buck car.

During testing, it ripped the head off our dragstrip driver. There was so much RF interference from the glovebox-mounted MSD, our timing computer would not function. Hell, we're lucky an orbiting AWACS plane didn't mistake it for the electromagnetic pulse of a nuclear detonation and order an F-111 retaliatory strike. It was obvi-

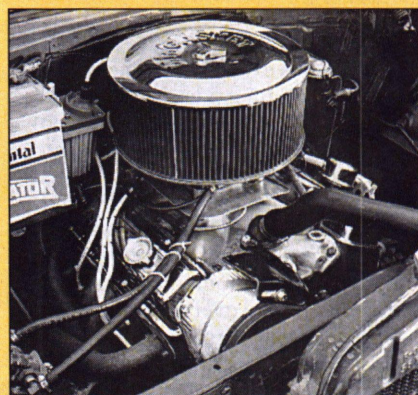


ously the fastest car. Braking, Fuel Economy, and the Slalom were not kind to this 37-year-old monster. But it was flawless during the Ride & Drive.

### Specifications

General	
Wheelbase (in.)	115.0
Track f/r (in.)	58.0/58.8
Length (in.)	195.6
Weight (lb.)	3200 (appx.)
Tires	BFGoodrich Radial T/A
	F: P215/65R15
	R: P275/60R15

Drivetrain	
Engine	Pushrod Cast-Iron V8
Displacement (ci)	406
Compression Ratio	11.8:1
Horsepower	400 @ 6000 rpm
Torque (lbs.-ft.)	450 @ 5200 rpm
Transmission	TH350 3-speed automatic
Rearend Ratio	3.55:1



## 1972 Oldsmobile Cutlass

**Rick and Vicki Bowers**

St. Louis, Missouri

If there were a perseverance award, Rick and Vicki Bowers would have won it for surviving their experience with the "Car Transporter From Hell." Traveling nearly 2000 miles just to enter Real Street is almost enough to make us believe what we do here at CC is important.

This is RSE's first Oldsmobile, and it came with a Mondello-stuffed, nitrous-sniffing 455, F-car front disc brakes, and most of the H-O Racing suspension that made Ken Crocie's '64 GTO so close a match for a ZR-1 ("Old Goat New Tricks," CC 10/92). The Blower's Oldsmobile isn't as optimized as that GTO, but it works mighty good.

During testing, the Olds stayed mid-pack in nearly every test. Despite its huge size, it was even faster than the Mustang on the Slalom and never behaved stupidly. That lack of idiocy

showed again when it completed the Ride & Drive without complaint. The solidity of the construction was impressive, but it lacked detail.

### Specifications

General	
Wheelbase (in.)	112.0
Track f/r (in.)	59.3/59.0
Length (in.)	203.6
Weight (lb.)	3768 (appx.)
Tires	BFGoodrich Comp T/A
	F: P245/50VR16
	R: P255/50VR16

Drivetrain	
Engine	Pushrod Cast-Iron V8
Displacement (ci)	462
Compression Ratio	8.5:1
Horsepower	400 @ 5800 rpm
Torque (lbs.-ft.)	500 @ 4000 rpm
Transmission	TH400 3-speed automatic
Rearend Ratio	3.08:1

## The Popularity Prize

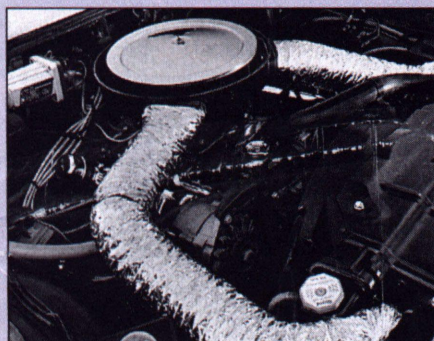
After subjecting our RSE competitors to two days of BFG-abusing track testing, hurl-and-spew mountain road driving, and several trips to the Ontario Marriott's fabulous all-you-can-binge buffet table, we gave them the chance to speak out. Specifically, as to which of the cars—other than their own—was their favorite.

Contrary to what you might expect, the machine chosen as "coolest ride" by five out of the 10 entrants was not the fastest, nor the best handling, or even the vehicle that won the competition. Erik Bergren's '70 Chevelle won the popularity contest hands down with its classic bodywork, quality of restoration, and all-around strong performance. Others that rated honorable mentions included

Chris Myrhe's Mustang, Don Sanford's Sycamore, and Adi Mudaliar's GN.

And why such a high percentage of votes for Erik's Chevelle? Most everyone seemed to agree with Leon Li's comment that "Any car that'll chirp its tires in fourth gear is OK with me."

—C. Van Tune







one another is explained by the similarity of their modifications.

Blair's '58 Ford gained big points for its neat paint, custom-upholstered interior, glove box-mounted stereo, custom grille, and detailed tri-power engine. But the tach and speedometer were disconnected. One judge noted that the car "needs plug wire looms, headers, windshield wipers, and overall wiring help."

The '55 Chevy garnered praise for its sleeper status. "Performance isn't pretty" said one judge, but "if you want to know how to build a fast street Shoebox, call Lynn Mosmeyer." "The engine compartment is as unimpressive as a junkyard dog" another judge noted, "but hey, it could pass for a 265!"

According to Lynn, his '55 has a total of \$4000 in it, so most of it is stock except for the well-executed mechanical changes, including the front disc brakes, 12-bolt rear, and Turbo 350 tranny. For what it is, and what a money winner as a street racer it could be everyone loved it.

Chris Rentas' Camaro was built quick to go quick, and the compromises show.

### Craftsmanship

1989 Mustang	118.75
1988 Supra	115.33
1970 Chevelle	113.75
1986 Corvette	111.92
1991 Sycamore	97.50
1987 Grand National	96.67
1955 Bel Air	93.08
1958 Ford	91.66
1972 Cutlass	88.58
1970 Camaro	83.17

### Ride & Drive

On the 127.9-mile Ride & Drive, the most unforgivable sin was not completing the route. Right behind that was overheating. Chris Rentas' Camaro overheated, and his score reflects that. Judges, though, were surprised by how well the car handled despite the lack of a front bar, but hated the fiberglass seats.

Ken Zeller's Corvette's brakes went away. We've never had any problem with late-model Vette brakes before, but these, which set the shortest distance in

## 1970 Chevrolet Chevelle

Erik Bergren

La Palma, California

Nothing in RSE was more traditionally street machine than Erik Bergren's big-block '70 Chevelle. And, though it didn't win, it was the car every judge wanted to own (for weekends).

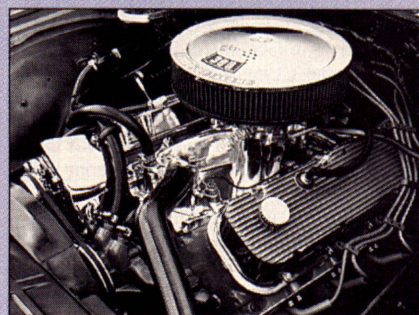
His car is 22, but Erik's only 19, so he can't have the memories this machine evokes. Stealing time from his glamorous job retrieving driving range golf balls, Erik built the car with his dad Richard and friend James Powers. When his dad showed up at RSE in a nasty, '32 Hi-boy "support vehicle," three CC staffers volunteered for adoption.

The Chevelle's slightly overbored 427, inhaling through a Holley Double Pumper and Edelbrock Tarantula manifold and sending its waste out through Hooker headers and Flowmaster mufflers, was the friendliest carbureted big-block any judge could remember. The way it sounds could lead one to believe it was exhaling through the brass section of the London Philharmonic.

It was mid-pack in Acceleration, but dropped in Braking, Slalom, and Fuel Economy. The 13.77 e.t. was, unsurprisingly, tire-limited. It scored in Craftsmanship for its gorgeous engine and resto look and did well during the Ride & Drive, completing it effortlessly.

### Specifications

General	
Wheelbase (in.)	112.0
Track f/r (in.)	60.0/59.9
Length (in.)	197.5



Weight (lb.)	3639 (appx.)
Tires	BFGoodrich Radial T/A F: P215/70R14 R: P275/60R15

Drivetrain	
Engine	Pushrod Cast-Iron V8
Displacement (ci)	440
Compression Ratio	9.75:1
Horsepower	480 @ 5750 rpm
Torque (lbs.-ft.)	470 @ 3500 rpm
Transmission	M20, Wide Ratio, 4-speed
Rearend Ratio	3.73:1

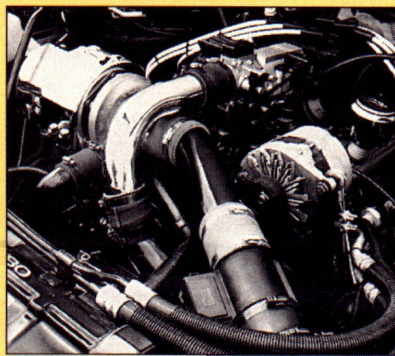
## 1987 Buick Grand National

Adi Mudaliar

Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada

Buicks are "doctor's cars" and for doctors addicted to performance, there's the Grand National. So when Dr. Adi Mudaliar submitted his bracket-racing GN, how could we resist?

Despite Canadian socialized medicine, Dr. Mudaliar's Buick is as fast as those down here. Faster even, since he freed up the exhaust system, changed the computer's chip, and added a K&N air filter. It had better handling too, with stiffer ATR variable rate springs at each corner,



ATR boxed control arms, Energy Suspension urethane end links, Bilstein shocks, and super gummy 16-inch tires.

The Grand National had perhaps the least done to its engine of any competitor, but it was near the top in performance. It never finished worse than fifth in any performance category, including the slalom where it was only 1/100th of a second slower than the Supra. Not surprisingly, it handled the Ride & Drive easily.

Along with the 5.0 Mustang, the Grand National was the great performance achievement of the Eighties. Its performance in RSE proves that.

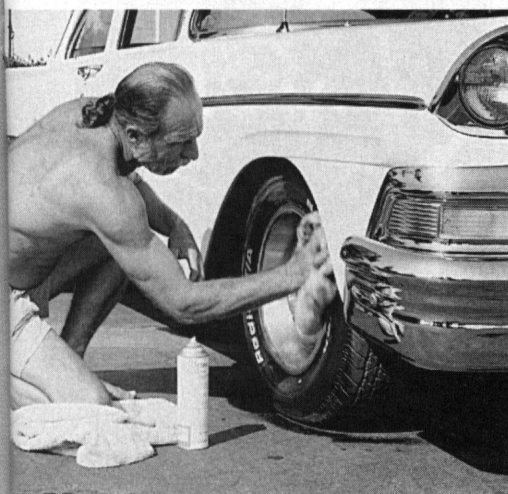
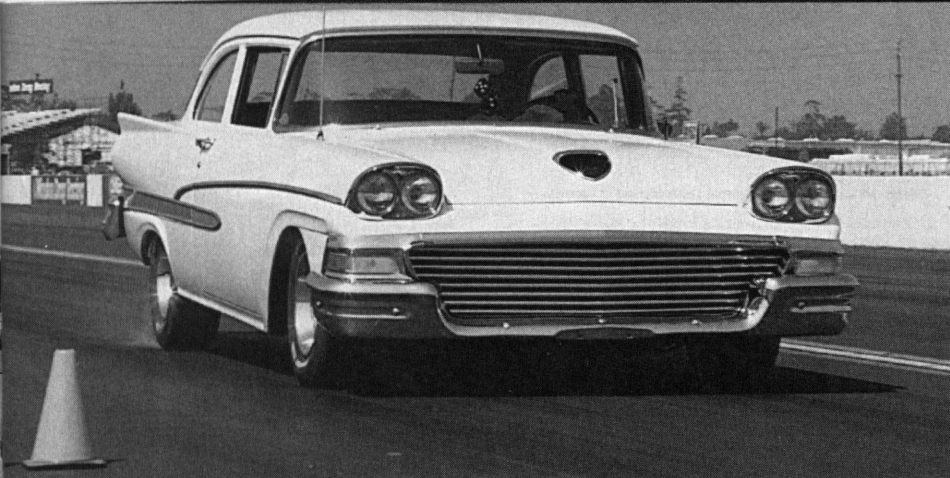
### Specifications

General	
Wheelbase (in.)	108.1
Track f/r (in.)	58.5/57.7
Length (in.)	200.6
Weight (lb.)	3500
Tires	F: P245/50ZR16 R: P255/50ZR16

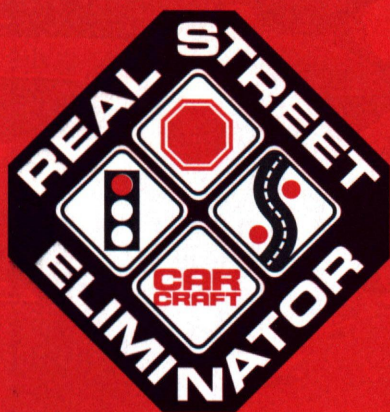
Drivetrain	
Engine	Pushrod Cast-Iron Turbo V6
Displacement (ci)	231
Compression Ratio	8.0:1
Horsepower	400 @ 4200 rpm
Torque (lbs.-ft.)	450 @ 3400 rpm
Transmission	TH200-4R 4-speed automatic
Rearend Ratio	3.42:1











testing, vanished during mountain driving, so his score suffers.

One judge noted about Lynn Mosmeyer's '55 "very #%&\*ing cool." As cool as it was, with its wild cam, loose converter, and loose vintage steering box, it wasn't the easiest or most comfortable car for a long drive. The car ran a bit warm up the mountain, but nothing drastic. The disc brakes improved things markedly, but standards of comfort and driveability have come a long way since this essentially stock '55 was built.

Leon Li's Supra didn't do anything untoward, but these judges worship low-end throttle and there wasn't enough in the Supra for them. They complained that the engine demands too much shifting to get the most out of it. Big kudos went to its quick steering turn-in and stiff, but not harsh, ride.

Rick Blowers' big, comfortable Cutlass didn't shame itself. Malcontent C. Van Tune noted that, ergonomically, "Olds is the worst of musclecar intermediates," but admitted that "if you can stand the interior, it handles well and seats five." For the other judges it seemed low on power and high on handling, and that earned it over 77 points.

"Very cool, very fast, very stock," is how one judge summed up Adi Mudaliar's Grand National. A big, comfortable car, the only complaints were extra turbo noise and harshness from the stiff suspension. Otherwise, this is a car long on traditional Buick comfort.

A speck ahead of the Buick was Don Sanford's Syclyone. The closeness is explained by the similarity of the complaints; the only thing anyone could find fault with on Don's mostly stock truck was its relatively noisy turbo.

Everyone adored Erik Bergren's Chevelle. "More torque than a D-9 Caterpillar," said one enraptured. "Extremely fun to drive," said another. It shifted beautifully, was super comfortable, and didn't complain during the drive. All it lacked here was modern creature comforts.

The best score went to the Mustang.

## 1991 GMC Syclyone

Don Sanford

Whittier, California

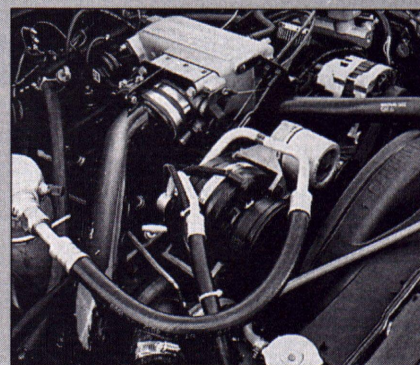
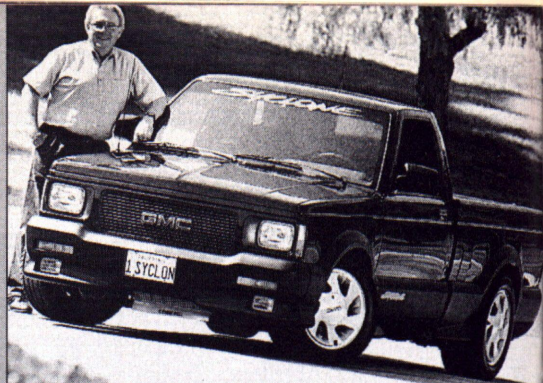
At last year's RSE, a Syclyone was our pace vehicle. Every one of the competitors wanted us to run the truck in the competition; a Syclyone is just too tantalizing to see merely parked. So this year, we recruited a Syclyone—an owner-modified Syclyone—for the competition. The first all-wheel-drive vehicle and the first truck in RSE.

Don Sanford already owned a Grand National stuffed with Kenne-Bell goodies when the urge for a Syclyone hit. On went Kenne-Bell's upgraded turbo and huge intercooler. The battery was moved to the back, a reprogrammed chip went aboard, a new torque converter was installed, and the truck was lowered 2 inches.

As far as high-tech credentials go, the Syclyone had the most. And it finished near the top of the performance categories, falling down only in Fuel Economy. Essentially new, it was lauded for the quality of its modifications, but not their extent. During the Ride & Drive it was flawless.

### Specifications

General	
Wheelbase (in.)	108.3
Track f/r (in.)	57.8/58.0
Length (in.)	180.5
Weight (lb.)	3600 (appx.)
Tires	BFGoodrich Comp T/A F: P245/50ZR16 R: P245/50ZR16



### Drivetrain

Engine	Pushrod Cast-Iron Turbo V6
Displacement (ci)	262
Compression Ratio	8.35:1
Horsepower	350 @ 4000 rpm
Torque (lbs.-ft.)	400 @ 3600 rpm
Transmission	TH700R4 4-speed automatic
Transfer Case Ratio	1:1
Rearend Ratio	3.42:1

## 1988 Toyota Supra Turbo

Leon Li

Rancho Palos Verdes, California

This is the first four-valve engine to enter RSE. The first overhead cam engine. The first to displace less than 200 cubic inches. The first to wear 17-inch wheels. And, oh yeah, the first Toyota.

The Supra has always been sort of a Japanese Camaro, so it's about as close to being a natural for CC as any foreign car. Beyond the similarity in size, the Supra is about 200-pounds heavier than a third-generation F-car. This is one big car.

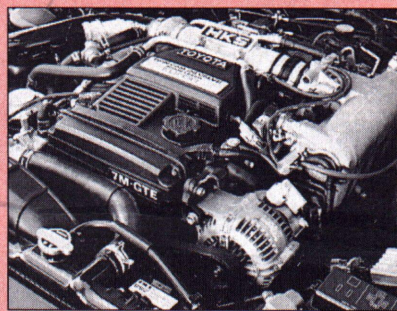
Leon Li threw the HKS catalog at his Supra. With an oversize HKS/Garrett AR50 sport turbo,

meanest looking Toyota any judge had seen. That may all sound expensive, Leon reports a total investment of \$4000 above his initial purchase price. We know of street machines with more money in their induction systems. Used Supras like Leon's run about \$15,000.

During testing, the Supra was consistently at, or near, the top five in every category, winning the Slalom. The integration of components was admired and the car ran the Ride & Drive easily.

### Specifications

General	
Wheelbase (in.)	102.2
Track f/r (in.)	58.5/58.5
Length (in.)	181.9
Weight (lb.)	3534 (appx.)
Tires	BFGoodrich Comp T/A F: P235/45ZR17 R: P255/40ZR17
Drivetrain	
Engine	Turbocharged DOHC 24-valve L6
Displacement (ci)	183
Compression Ratio	8.0:1
Horsepower	434 @ 6000 rpm
Torque (lbs.-ft.)	450 @ 5000 rpm
Transmission	5-speed manual
Rearend Ratio	3.73:1



a vast HKS intercooler, and an HKS PFC-FCon engine control computer, the output of the engine went up exponentially. Combined with a lowered suspension and massive wheel and tire combo, this is the







Chris Myrhe's attention to detail paid off again in a car that did everything while-coddling its occupants. "The best of all worlds; A/C nice, steering great, handles beautifully, and rides nice," noted one judge. The clutch was a bit sticky, but no other car would have made as pleasant an everyday driving companion. It didn't inspire the same passionate responses the Chevelle did, but it earned everyone's respect and admiration.

Blair Smith did not participate in the Ride & Drive with his '58 Ford.

#### Ride & Drive

1989 Mustang	84.17
1970 Chevelle	81.17
1991 Syclore	80.50
1987 Grand National	80.17
1972 Cutlass	77.83
1988 Supra	75.00
1955 Bel Air	70.50
1986 Corvette	69.17
1970 Camaro	59.05
1958 Ford	DNF

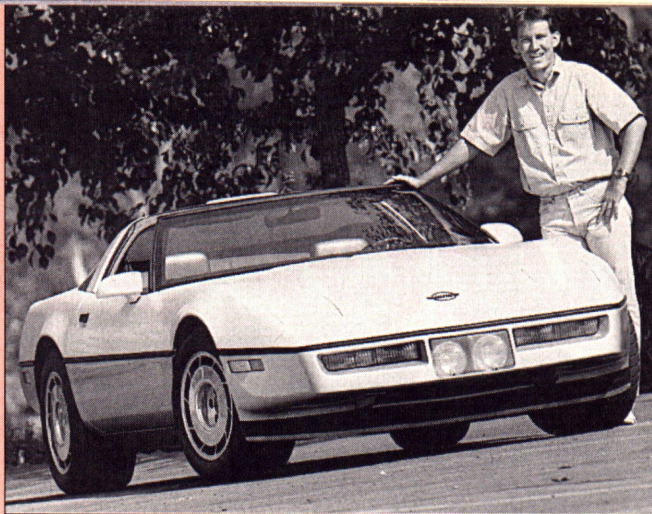
#### The Overall Winner

Add the objective totals with the subjective evaluations and the winner is... Chris Myrhe's '89 Mustang LX 5.0. For the second year in a row, a 5.0-liter Mustang wins Real Street Eliminator.

Myrhe's Mustang didn't win a single event in the objective scoring, but was close in all of them. Its solid, if unspectacular, track performance left it less than 15 points behind the leading Corvette going into Day Two.

The Craftsmanship and Ride & Drive evaluations made the difference; Chris won both of those outright. The level of detail on his car far surpassed everyone else's, with emphasis on the little things that take more effort than dollars. And nothing drove as comfortably or reliably. Chris Myrhe's car won because of its overall balance, not its overwhelming performance.

No car embarrassed itself here. But our winner proves that it's not dollars that build a great performance vehicle, it's time and sweat spent carefully modifying a good, solid car.



competitions. Goes to show what anti-lock technology and a massively over-driven transmission can do. Subjectively, Ken's Corvette didn't fare as well, with his intake-right-over-the-headers coming in for criticism during Craftsmanship judging and the deterioration of the otherwise phenomenal brakes detracting from the Ride & Drive.

## 1986 Chevrolet Corvette

**Ken Zeller**

Aliso Viejo, California

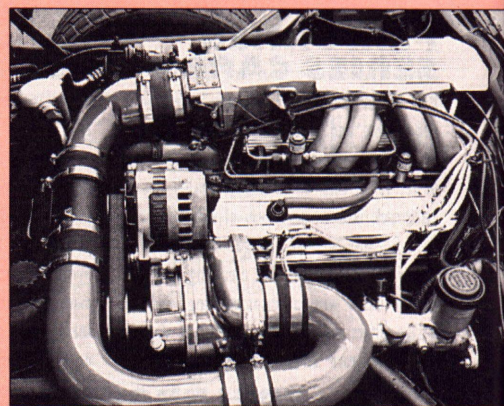
Good late-model Corvettes are cheap. In a recent *L.A. Times* classified section, there were three for sale at less than \$14K—an '84 was down under \$10K! Look at it this way: Erik Bergren paid \$7200 for his '70 Chevelle raw material. For a couple thousand dollars more, he could have started with one of the most advanced chassis and suspensions in the world! Chevilles are cool, but a Corvette?! Babe magnet par excellence!

Since used Corvettes are affordable, they're popular for modifications. Mechanical engineer Ken Zeller's '86 started with all the good stuff, from the factory "bonecrusher" Z51 showroom stock suspension to the Doug Nash 4+3 overdrive transmission and the L98 Tuned Port 350. To that, Ken added a set of smog-"exempted" Air Flow Research aluminum heads, a JET smog chip, an emission-approved Top Gun nitrous system, and a CARB-approved Paxton supercharger. All are reasonable upgrades that result in a better, and legal, combination for not a lot of bucks.

The whine of the supercharger and the knowledge of how awesome the Corvette is in the first place had the judges in conniptions even before getting in the thing. As expected, it earned the most points during objective testing, winning both the Braking and, get this, Fuel Economy

#### Specifications

<b>General</b>	
Wheelbase (in.)	96.2
Track f/r (in.)	59.6/60.4
Length (in.)	176.5
Weight (lb.)	3250 (appx.)
Tires	BFGoodrich Comp T/A F: P255/50ZR16 R: P255/50ZR16
<b>Drivetrain</b>	
Engine	Pushrod Cast-Iron V8
Displacement (ci)	350
Compression Ratio	8.3:1
Horsepower	420 @ 4500 rpm
Torque (lbs.-ft.)	560 @ 3500 rpm
Transmission	Doug Nash 4+3 Manual
Rearend Ratio	3.07:1



#### Overall Results (\*estimated)

CONTESTANTS	ACCELERATION		SLALOM		BRAKING	
	Secs/mph	Points	MPH	Points	Feet	Points
1989 Mustang	13.45 @ 107.81	86.99	63.72	72.31	144	38.19
1986 Corvette	13.51 @ 102.65	86.60	65.04	73.81	<b>110</b>	<b>50.00</b>
1988 Supra	13.87 @ 105.05	84.35	<b>66.09</b>	<b>75.00</b>	134	41.04
1991 Syclore	13.63 @ 96.26	85.84	65.67	74.52	128	42.97
1987 Grand National	13.55 @ 106.42	86.35	65.98	74.88	142	38.73
1970 Chevelle	13.77 @ 102.51	84.97	55.65	63.15	152	36.18
1972 Cutlass	14.66 @ 96.80	79.81	63.82	72.42	146	37.67
1955 Bel Air	<b>*11.70 @ 110.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>	51.72	58.69	180	30.56
1970 Camaro	13.79 @ 100.69	84.84	58.69	66.60	149	36.91
1958 Ford	15.90 @ 87.81	73.59	49.89	56.61	176	31.25





the stock shocks, and BFGoodrich Comp T/As on Center Line wheels.

In testing, this Mustang never embarrassed itself and, with the help of nitrous, was second in Acceleration. Of course, it dropped all the jaws during the Craftsmanship judging and performed perfectly during the Ride & Drive.

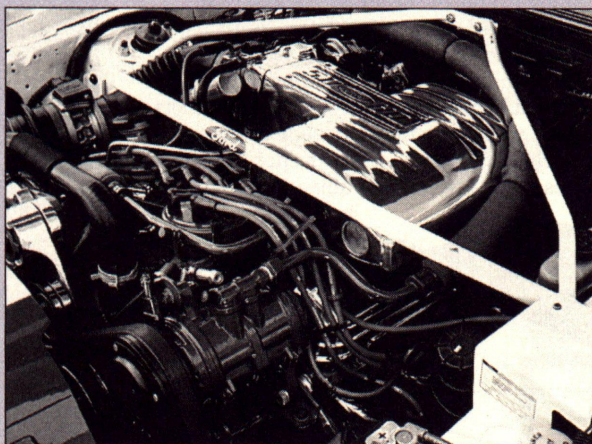
## 1989 Mustang LX 5.0

**Chris Myrhe**  
Orange, California

Last year, Mark Pittington's 5.0-liter won RSE. So this year Mark sent along the nicest other Mustang he knew about: Chris Myrhe's '89 LX.

Detail is what impressed everyone about Chris's car. From the stripes that carried through the engine compartment to the finely polished pieces strewn throughout the car, this was the most pristine car. There's a lot of sweat equity in this car; more has been done through owner effort than dollar application. It's work anyone could do, but few have the patience to do.

Most of the engine is stock, except for a Ford Motorsport B303 camshaft (0.480 lift, 224 duration on both the exhaust and intake sides), ported intake system, 65mm throttle body, large capacity fuel pump, under-drive pulleys, homemade cold air induction, a mass airflow meter machined to a 59mm bore, and plenty of juice through an N.O.S. 70hp nitrous system. Handling is achieved with a sub-frame connector, urethane bushings, BBK springs,



### Specifications

**General**  
Wheelbase (in.) 100.5  
Track f/r (in.) 56.6/56.6  
Length (in.) 179.6  
Weight (lb.) 3000 (appx.)  
Tires BFGoodrich Comp T/A  
F: P245/45ZR16  
R: P245/50ZR16

**Drivetrain**  
Engine Pushrod Cast-Iron V8  
Displacement (ci) 302  
Compression Ratio 9.0:1  
Horsepower 300 @ 5200 rpm  
Torque (lbs.-ft.) 350 @ 3500 rpm  
Transmission 5-speed manual  
Rearend Ratio 3.73:1



#### FUEL ECONOMY

MPG Points

#### CRAFTSMANSHIP

Points

#### RIDE & DRIVE

Points

#### TOTAL

Points

18.01	23.59	118.75	84.17	424.00
19.09	25.00	111.92	69.17	416.50
18.53	24.27	115.33	75.00	414.99
14.70	19.25	97.50	80.50	400.58
17.52	22.94	96.67	80.17	399.74
9.54	12.49	113.75	81.17	391.71
10.75	14.08	88.58	77.83	370.39
6.80	8.91	93.08	70.50	361.74
10.75	14.08	83.17	59.05	344.65
DNF	0.00	91.66	DNF	DNF (253.11)