

257 MPH ON 2 LITERS! BACKYARD-BUILT RECORD BREAKER

APRIL 2007

MOPAR ACTION

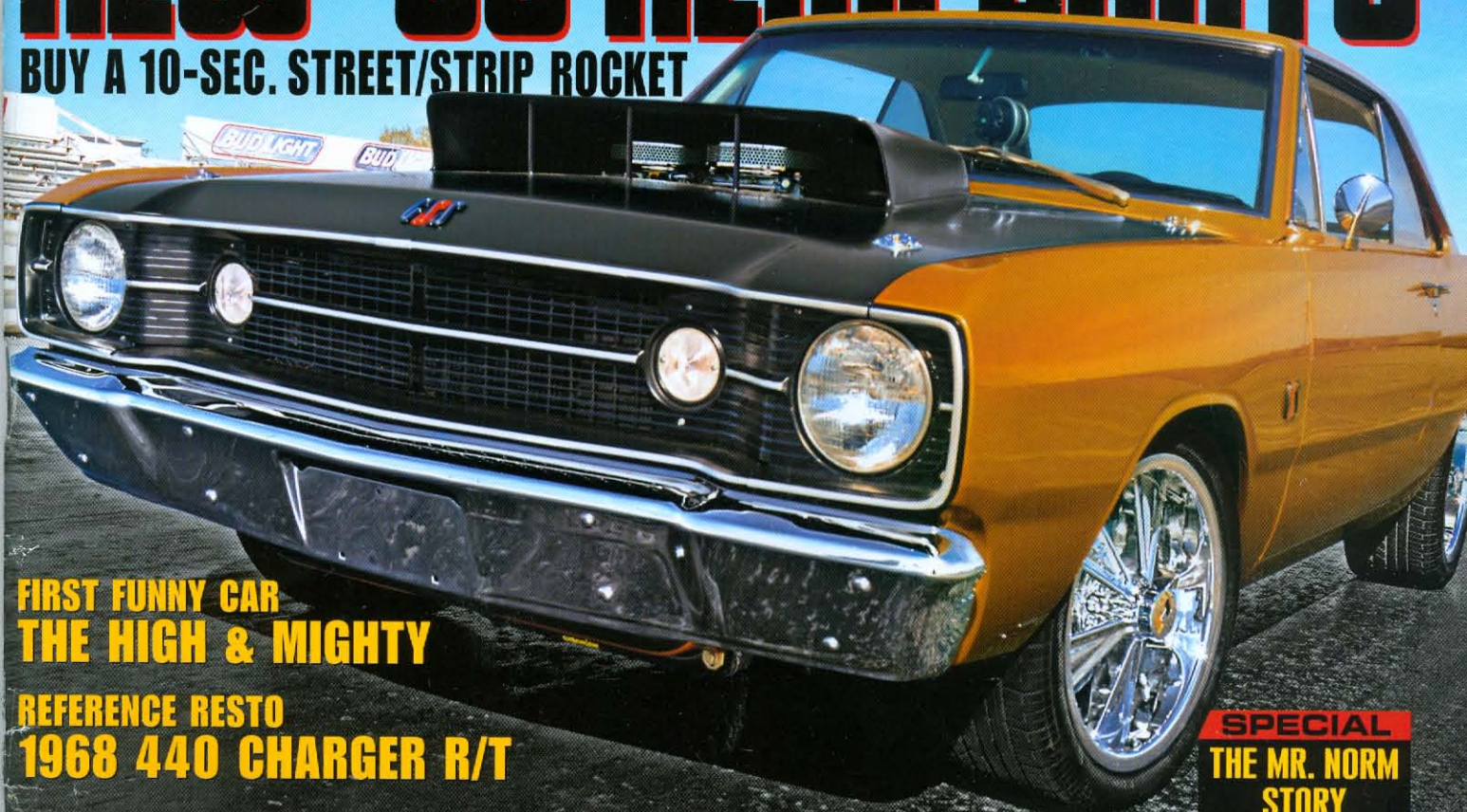
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THEY'RE BACK!

NEW '68 HEMI DARTS

BUY A 10-SEC. STREET/STRIP ROCKET



FIRST FUNNY CAR
THE HIGH & MIGHTY

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1968 440 CHARGER R/T

AWESOME TECH

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SPECIAL
THE MR. NORM
STORY
PLUS
GALLERY OF
CSS DARTS &
DEMONS

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6-SPEED
CHARGER
SRT-8



'70 CUDA—FIND ONE MORE RADICAL AND WE'LL EAT THIS MAGAZINE!





COVER STORY

Supercar Returns

Prototype GSS Dart No. 001 ran strong and straight in its first outing at the track. Suspension still needed to be dialed in.





Dart turned 11.0 at an altitude of 4500 ft. At sea level, and with some suspension adjustments, look for 10.75-10.80s.

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The 1968 Hemi Dart is back, and it's better than ever. Anyone for a 10-second street/stripper?

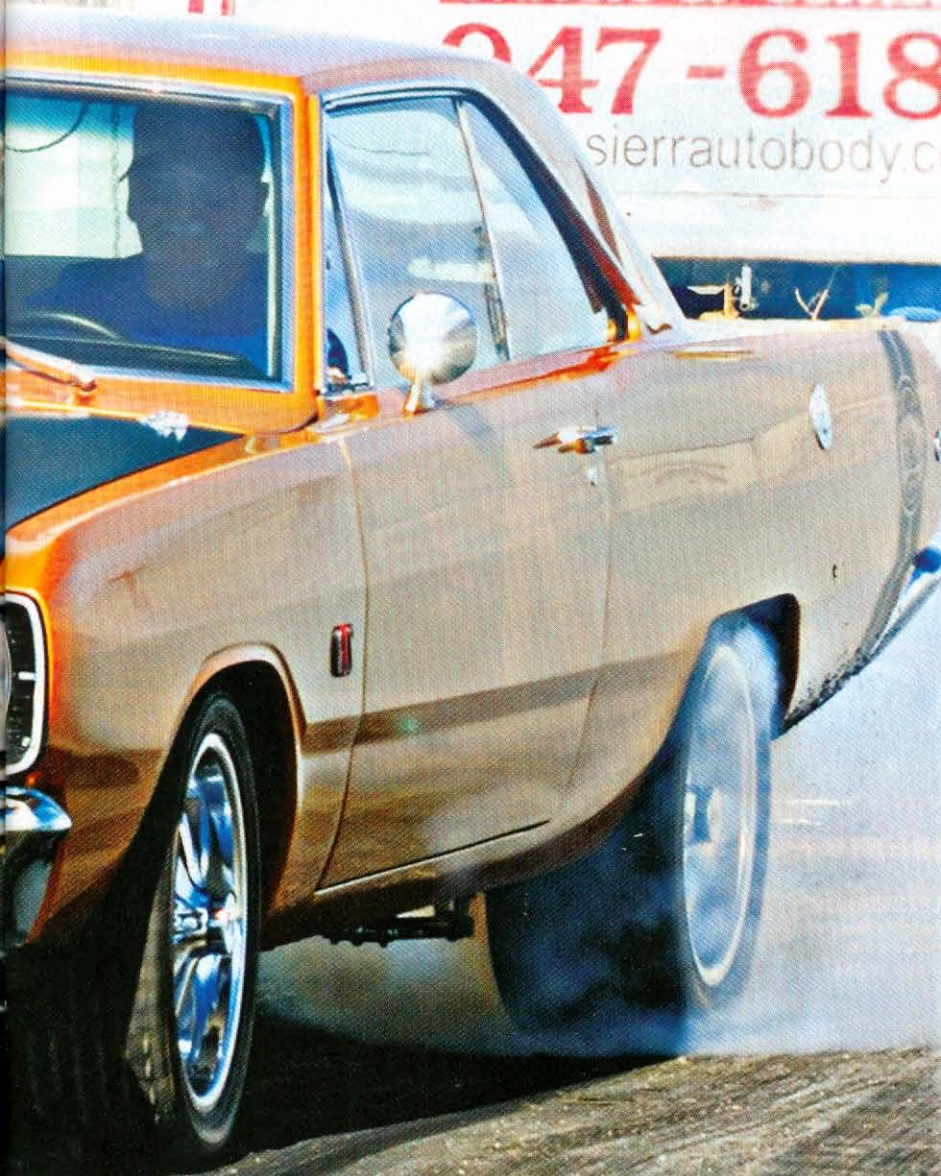
By Cliff Gromer

Photos by TheBruntBros

Without question, the baddest stick on the block back in the supercar days (nobody called them "musclecars" in the '60s)—was the '68 Hemi Dart that was modified by Hurst for Chrysler. This car even looked nasty all decked out in its primed gray body with black gelcoat fenders and fiberglass hood with the big scoop. Forget that the Hemi Dart wasn't so hot as a driver on the street. In fact it was *terrible*—and illegal. But if you wanted to be king on the strip or late-night street action, nothing could come close. Of course, you either did this with a dealer plate, or *no* plate, since Hemi Darts couldn't be legally registered in any state.

If you missed out on the Hemi Dart the first time around because you were making only a buck an hour and couldn't scrape up the down on a \$4600 car, or because you hadn't even been born yet, you've now got another shot. That's right, a better-than-new 1968 Hemi Dart, and from no less a legend than the performance king, Mr. Norm, himself. Norm sold more new Hemi Darts than anyone in the business.

Norm came up with the idea for this outrageous street-legal machine, with the help of Al Kamhi, of Blue Moon Performance, in Winter Springs, FL. Blue Moon is a high end custom shop, and was awarded "Best Engineered" honors at the prestigious 2006 Grand National Roadster Show in Pomona. This is the same outfit that's building the some of the new 1969 Baldwin-Motion Super





528-inch stroker Hemi pumped out a dyno'd 727 HP. Mill uses MP Megablock and Indy Legend Hemi heads. An all-aluminum street bullet is said to be in the works.



CalTracs rear suspension features adjustable preload with split monoleaf and traction bars. Note added section in middle of wheelwell.

taking the '68 Dart out of the '68 Dart. Some of the other clones, like the Motion Super Camaro, with its wide fenders are more caricatures than faithful repros. And, they cost thousands more than the Mr. Norm's Dart, which is the real deal. As was true with the original, the new Dart places emphasis on unreal acceleration.

The original Hemi Dart came through with radio and heater delete and no back seat. The reborn Dart, in stock trim, comes through radio and heater delete, but it does have a back seat. Blue Moon will add stereo and A/C if you wish, but they hide the units, to maintain the original flavor. The Moonies will even delete the back seat if you wish.

Body

Blue Moon starts out with a '68 Dart 2-door, which they take completely apart. They keep basically the bare shell, fenders, doors, trunk, dash and seat frames. Most everything else goes on eBay. The shell is treated to a complete rotisserie restoration. Most resto shops media blast the sheetmetal to remove paint, rust, filler etc. But this creates heat which can distort the metal. Blue Moon uses an exclusive water blasting process that does the same job without the heat.

Working with a company that water blasts bridges and huge water tanks, Blue Moon had them develop special heads that at a fine



Control Freaks front suspension uses upper and lower control arms and coilovers, and rack-and-pinion steering (see also below). Gives a great road feel.



setting can remove just the clear coat layer of a paint job. At the other extreme, the water jet will blast off everything, including the factory seam sealer, leaving the metal super shiny. An additive in the rinse water prevents the metal from oxidizing.

The shell is then mounted on a chassis table where the rear tubs are split up the middle, and the inside part of the tub is moved inboard 3-1/2" up to the subframe. The gap is filled with fabricated sheetmetal

containing bead rolls. Blue Moon designed their own subframe connectors, which are welded in.

The body is then blueprinted, which corrects the factory anomalies in the sheetmetal. Because of the curvature of the factory stampings, the lower part of the left and right quarters were not identical. They are identical when Blue Moon finishes with them.

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