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1972 Chevy C10 - Shaved Cheyenne Used To Be A Super

By Phil Schwartze
Photography by John Gilbert

Have you ever seen a stock six-cylinder Mustang with a big ol' Saleen wing on the back? How about a 454 cowl-induction hood on a truck that still has the stock 307 motor? For Brian Henson, a true hot rod is about having the bite to back up your bark. In other words, it's all about being low, lean, and mean. The year that was arguably the last battle cry of aesthetics and power in the American car market was 1972—a year of truck that Brian had been in the market to buy for a few years prior to spotting this '72 C10 at an auction in Turlock, California. Its sleek lines, last-year body style, stock four-wheel disc brakes, and the fact that he could modify it to the fiery horsepower level he wanted made it the perfect platform to start with. After talking the previous owner into a deal before it went on the auction block, Brian was well on his way to reigniting the flame that lived in this old American [workhorse](#).



The day after Brian took possession of his C10, he was off and running; buying parts for its transformation. The initial vision was all about making the already smooth lines even more streamlined and giving it a powerplant throatier than Thurl Ravenscroft. The first thing Brian did was replace the stock 350 with a beefed up version he had previously built. After driving it around for about a year and accumulating parts, Brian bought a Fab 9 mini-spool posi rearend with 4.11 gears and then things really got going.



The frame was modified with a custom four-link suspension with Total Cost Involved coilover shocks. In front, you'll find McGaughy's 2-inch drop spindles, KYB shocks, and 3-inch drop springs. The big 'n' little Centerlines with knockoffs complete the fierce old-school look.

Bodywork was the next order of business, to which Brian enjoyed adding his own personal touches. New SS mirrors were molded to each side, the door locks (but not the handles or running lights) were shaved off, and the rear glass was custom designed to be flush with the body and isn't encased in rubber. Brian bought some aftermarket fender walls and cut the center out before seaming them down the middle of the stock ones so it could be wider but maintain a factory appearance. The rear was tubbed 4 inches on each side to accommodate the fat Hoosiers. Brian's friend Jim Lieder helped fab the custom electric tonneau cover from a single sheet of aluminum to fit down inside the bed instead of on top of it. The top and bottom of the bed received the Line-X treatment and it is completely sealed to prevent any rust from creeping its way in. To keep the sleek lines wrapping all the way around, Brian also smoothed the [tailgate](#) and moved the handle to the inside. The loud yellow paint provides just the aggressive look Brian wanted.



After giving it some more thought, Brian wasn't content to keep the 350 he'd built in the truck, and knew he couldn't build anything cheaper than he could buy outta the box. He decided to go big with a ZZ502 crate motor, which sports a 750 Demon carb, Sanderson headers, and HEI ignition. Brian opted not to go with a serpentine system to keep it looking more period authentic. All this horsepower is piped to a '74 Vette Turbo 400 tranny with a 3,500-rpm stall.

The clean and simple look of the interior keeps the continuity of the hot rod theme running strong. Cal Fast upholstered the seats and door panels in flame-embossed black leather. The dash sports a No Limit cluster with Auto Meter Pro Comp gauges, which get their juice through a Painless wiring kit. The flamed Colorado Custom wheel steers this behemoth with Brian at the helm. Future plans may include ghost flames to bring everything full circle and complete the hot rod punch—just the way Brian likes it.

We won't get into dollar figures spent on Brian's '72, but it does bring up a theory that "hot rod" could be synonymous with more than burning rubber. Perhaps it's also about burning holes in your pockets.



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