

CAR OF THE QUARTER . . .

'67 Dodge Coronet R/T by Brandon Seale



My love for Mopars began way back when I was around the age of 6 or 7. My father, Richard Seale, at the time had a small collection of old Dodges, and there was always one that seemed to catch my eye. It was the 1967 Dodge Coronet R/T. It was white with a dark red interior. I can remember telling Dad that I wanted that car when I got older. He, of course, said that he would allow me to have it once I was of age to drive and I couldn't have been any happier.

Well, a few years later my family fell into hard times and one of the family Mopars had to be sold, and it turned out that someone else had also eyed my Dad's R/T. The transaction was made and my dream car was gone. The vehicle was sold to a gentleman, Mike Morris, who later restored it to the state it deserved to be in and it's still in to this day.

Having to sell "my" white Coronet R/T upset my father and without me knowing he began the search for a replacement car.

After a few years of searching, he did find one. It just so happened that Mike Morris had found a blue on blue 1967 Coronet R/T. So Dad bought the un-restored Coronet R/T from Mr. Morris. He surprised me one day by revealing it to me that he had purchased the vehicle for me to have. This all occurred back in 2000, and I, a sophomore in high school at the time, felt as if I had just won the lottery. I, as well as my father and best friend, Kyle Clemens, immediately looked over the car and began its restoration.

Now try to imagine the original car's condition. The body was, amazingly, rust free, despite 3 prior paint jobs laid one on the other with no sanding between. Its chrome parts were intact with typical pitting but in all together great shape. The only major flaw was that the passenger side rear quarter panel had been repaired from a previous accident by mostly Bondo. We replaced the piece with a straight rear quarter panel salvaged from a junkyard. Once the body work was complete we began on the interior.

The interior of the car was complete, for the most part, and was in great condition. Under the diamond tuck seat covers were the original medium blue metallic seat covers with all the decorative badges. This was a major find because we all know how difficult it is to find Mopar parts these days. I purchased new black seat covers from Legendary Interiors as well as black carpet and headliner. The original door panels were blue, but I made the decision to change them to black as well. My dash was in average condition but a new dash bezel from Mr. G's was installed. I then sent my gauge cluster off to Redline Gauges to have it serviced and to have white faced-gauges applied. My R/T had the optional center console, but it being almost 40 years old was cracked and unusable so my father bought a replacement black reproduction console, which, after several hours of buffing the chrome, the top plate came out looking good as new.

By this time, with the interior mostly new and waiting to be put back into the car, I had to decide what color to paint the car. I was torn between its original blue color or making a change to black. After much contemplating and consulting with Dad and Kyle I decided to go with black. Shortly it was in the shop of Shawn Burks undergoing its makeover.

He did the final bodywork and painting for me and I personally don't think that anyone short of Chip Foose could have done a better job. So the only thing left was the engine. The car originally had a 383. We found a 440 to replace it. The block was torn down with my dad's help along with Kyle and sent to Duffin's. He bored the block 30 over and sent it back to us. My dad decided that, this being my first muscle car, it should be built somewhat mild, much to my displeasure. So a Mopar Performance 280-474 cam was installed along with stock re-finished cast iron heads. Fuel is fed through an 800 CFM Edelbrock carburetor as well as an Edelbrock Torker II intake manifold. The 440 breathes through Dynomax headers matched to a TTI 3-inch exhaust with Flowmaster mufflers.

All-in-all the restoration took 6 years to be completed, mostly because I was spending much time managing high school and sports. I couldn't have wished for my R/T to come out better than it did. I owe it all to Dad and to Kyle, also, a special thanks to Paul and Josh Gaspard, and Shawn Burks.