

CAR OF THE QUARTER . . .

'71 Dodge Charger by Edwin Dyer



Decisions, decisions. What to do?

Here we were, five-year members of the MMCSA and enjoying it all. We had Jorene's yellow 1966 Charger to participate in all of the Club activities. Cruises, parades, show and shines, car shows and the whole Monty. We had not been driving the Charger very much for many years. It was relegated to being a "spare" car to be used when ever we had to put one of our daily drivers in the shop for something. The year before joining the Club, we only bought one fill up of gasoline, now we were using about ten fill ups a year.

But there was a fly in the ointment.

We had added over 10,000 miles on the odometer and now it had over 90,000 miles on it. Whoa, wait a minute! I did not want to turn the odometer over, since the car was an original, one owner car. (Light clicks on). Hey, why don't we just get another car. Great idea.

First Friday night at the Pig Stand. Suddenly, a different Charger drives in the parking lot. Gene Allen is driving it. Gene says he has just recently acquired it, but had found it did not fit into his plans and he was short of parking space, so he was thinking about selling it. Some

times you can be at the right place at the right time. Gene, if you decide to sell, why don't you put me on the list. OK.

I had several opportunities to look the car over. It had been partially restored. All of the mechanical work had been done, so it ran like a top. All of the bodywork had been done, but it was painted a rather odd color. Butterscotch? L5?

The interior was a disaster area, thought. Headliner hanging down, seats split apart and the carpet had rotted out. The engine compartment was really bad because it had not been detailed when the engine was out. Well, what the heck. I just wanted an alternate car to drive, anyway.

The week before the Valentine Day Cruise, Gene calls and say he is ready to sell, and I say I am ready to buy. He drives to my house, and after some green stamps change hands, we go to Sweets and get the transfer done. I drive Gene home and then drive my new Charger to its new home. Jorene takes one look at it, and says, "I don't mind another car, but did you have to get such a crummy color?" Fortunately, after a while, she got used to it. After driving the car for a few months, I decided that it ran so good, I might just finish

restoring it. I found an upholstery shop on Goliad Road that would do the whole interior for what I thought was a reasonable price. When he finished the work, it was better than the original and I was really pleased.

Now the engine compartment. I had a good friend that was a really good body man, and years ago he had taught me how to get dirty engine compartment pretty clean. With a lot of elbow juice, I found that under all of the crud, the original paint still looked pretty good.

So then, it was just getting a few odds and ends fixed and everything fell into place. Every thing on it worked, except the driver.

The only recurring problem I have had was with the 2-barrel carburetor. The car had sat for some years undriven, and the carb was just not rebuildable into A1 condition. With a little help from Paul and Josh Gaspard, I got that fixed and now I am brave enough to go out of town on trips of some distance.

Oh, and I could not find any whipped cream to put on the Butterscotch, but I did put a "*Screaming Eagle*" on each front fender.