

CAR OF THE QUARTER . . .

'70 Dodge Super Bee by Wayne Keller



By now, I guess that you have heard the saying "Does it have a HEMI in it"? Here's a story about a 1970 Dodge HEMI Super Bee that finally came back to life after many years of hard work, lots of part scrounging, and last but not least, lots of cash.

I bought the 1970 - 383 Super Bee in November of 1995, from the 2nd owner for \$1,500. The deal came with a truckload of parts, including a 1966 Chevy truck with the drive train from a '70 Coronet R/T. The guy I bought the car from had owned it since 1972, so I figured that the car must be in pretty decent shape...right???? WRONG!!!! Turns out that the guy was 17 in 1972 when he bought the car and had done just about every kind of 70's and 80's modification in the book. What we are talking about different color primers over the purple

and white paint, bucket seat in exchange for the original bench seat and to make matters worse, black diamond tuck seat covers over the original white interior (yuck). The original pistol grip 4-speed shifter had been removed and the floorboards had been cut to accommodate an after market Vertical Gate shifter. The guy must have been a Chevy lover, since Corvette door handles had taken the place of the original handles. Last but not least, a "way up there" suspension had the car ready for lift-off and just about every piece of metal in the car had been chrome plated.

After many years of collecting parts, I finally decided that it was time to bring the Super Bee back to life. The basic body was to remain factory original, but I wanted to add every factory option available at the time. So

in went the 8 track stereo, tick-toc-tach, wood-grain steering wheel, bucket with buddy seats, remote trunk release, light package, push button seat belts, and last but not least a 426 HEMI motor. In retrospect, I probably should of stuck with the original 383. A few words of wisdom from someone who has gone through the trouble of making a HEMI fit into a B-body Mopar. If your car was originally equipped great, if not, don't waste your time and money. If you really want a HEMI buy a new Dodge truck or Magnum Wagon.

The car now is almost 100% complete and I am ready to finally enjoy her for a change. As for the HEMI in the Bee, I am looking forward to feel how it runs. You'll be seeing the car at upcoming car shows and maybe even buzzing down the road someday soon.