

Terry Schott's 1967 Blue GTO Parts Search Leads to another Project



As most of you know when you get in the car hobby, sometimes a small project turns in other directions and pretty soon you've done a lot more to your car than you ever dreamed you would. I got my 1967 red GTO in May of 1989 and it was in need of a new engine as well as minor body work and a fresh paint job. In December, 1990, I removed the engine and started to look for better trim pieces and other much needed parts. Back then there wasn't near the amount of reproduction parts available for GTO's as there are today.

In the process of looking for parts in June of 1991, I was talking to a co-worker (big Chevy 409 guy) and he told me of a wrecked GTO at a junkyard in Richwoods, MO. I knew I had to check it out. The next weekend I ran by the place. No one actually worked there any given hours, so I could only see it from a distance. The following week I talked to one of our mechanics at work that lived in Richwoods, and he got me a phone number of the guy who ran the junk-

yard.

A week later, I was back there again and this time I got to see the car. The car was a '67 GTO that had been wrecked in front, had no motor, and was missing all the stainless steel trim and rocker moldings. (Those were the moldings that I was really looking for.) I asked the man what had happened to them. He told me they were pretty nice so he had taken them off and had them at home. You see... he had another '67 GTO, a little rough he said, and he wanted to sell *it* and all the spare parts off of this one, together. He said he lived in Ware, MO, a few miles from there. I asked him if we could go look now, but he said he'd have to drag the car out to where we could see it better. He called me the next week and said that he had the car running, but it was still stuck in the mud. I decided to make the trip again. The first mistake was probably going to look at this car. But the bigger mistake was taking my wife along.

We drove about an hour to get there, and when we pulled up I saw it. It was a dark blue '67 GTO hardtop and it wasn't too beat up. It had weathered a lot and had more surface-type rust. It had a couple flat tires and was stuck in the mud created by a leaking drain field from the septic system of their house. The trunk was stacked full of parts and junk, but around that you could see rust holes through to the ground. The interior was stacked up with the loose seats and other junk. It had a '67, 400, 2 bbl motor (not a GTO motor) and was an automatic transmission. It did run halfway decent. When I opened the passenger door to



lean in and look around, I found an active wasp nest by the door hinge the size of a baseball. I closed the door pretty quickly! I wasn't too impressed by what I had seen. Then we went to his garage. There were my stainless steel rockers, not perfect, but plenty good enough to use if I polished

them. He also had a 4 speed Muncie transmission with factory linkage out of the junkyard car, as well as many other parts and pieces. I knew I needed a bunch of this stuff, so I told him I'd think about it and let him know. As soon as we got in my truck to leave Gail immediately told me, "YOU ARE NOT SERIOUSLY CONSIDERING BUYING THAT



JUNK!?" I told her I was still thinking about it.

I started adding up the cost of the big items he had, plus the parts car, and decided it wasn't too bad of a deal. I needed the 4 speed and the linkage to replace the 3 speed that was in my red car and I definitely needed the rockers. As a bonus it was a '67 GTO and the car came with all the stuff I needed! After the hour

ride back home, Gail just shook her head and conceded.

I called him back and told him to air up the tires and drag it out of the septic fields to a spot where I could load it up. So on July 10, of 1991, I was a proud owner of a '67 GTO parts car.

The car sat until early 1992 while I built the motor for my red '67. I got the red car running that summer and in No-





member of 1992 I started stripping out the '67 blue. I pulled out the old motor and transmission and stripped out the front fenders. It was a good winter project.

In the spring of '93, I pulled the high compression motor out of the red car and hauled the body to be worked on and painted. I had decided to build a 9 to 1 lower compression motor for the red car to run on pre-

mium unleaded pump gas. Since I had the high compression motor available I figured it was a good time to patch up "blue" and reuse the motor in it.

In late '93, I pulled the windshield out and did a lot of patching of rusted metal in the windshield channel area. The rear window area needed a lot of repairs as well. I'm no body man, but I got both ends repaired with quite a bit of help from my friend, Leroy Brune. All of the new metal was primed, but I just used canned blue spray paint, because I knew I'd have to paint the car down the road. It wasn't pretty, but it was all blue. I cut and installed a Lexan windshield and rear window in the car to save weight and cost of a new windshield.

The floor of the trunk was rusted out as well. Since I was into it this far, I replaced the body bushings in that area and then replaced most of the trunk floor pan, leaving just enough room to allow for a 10 gallon fuel cell instead of the original gas tank. By January of 1994, most all of that work was done. While it was apart, I replaced the front and





lower control arm bushings and ball joints. I redid the brakes as well.

By April of '94, I installed the high compression motor out of my red car. I also found a used 4 speed Tremac (top loader Ford) transmission. Since some of the gears needed replacing anyway, I sent them to Liberty Gear and

had pro-shift rings welded onto them. They take the damaged slider and main shaft gear and weld on a hardened steel part in its place. These parts have about a third of the teeth of the standard stock gear. This allows for a lot better shifting. In May the transmission was assembled and in the car, and by July the car was running.

In October of '94, I raced the car in a Gateway GTO drag event against the Corvette Club at MAR in Wentzville. I got beat because I broke out, but the car did run a 13.49, so I was pretty happy. I was running street slicks on Rally II wheels and traction was always a problem.

In '95, I cut out the rear fender wells to allow for some 10" Mickey Thompson slicks. It definitely helped my times. Later in the year when I went to the track, my times were 12.60's to 12.80's. I continued to run the car whenever I got a chance and with a few more tweaks, and by October of '96, I ran my best time of 12.12 at 111 mph. I had been running the car at MAR in Wentzville and since the car had started running faster, they wanted me to at least put a roll bar in it. In 1998 in preparation for the roll bar, I replaced the rest of the body mounts.

1999 brought about the installation of the 8 point Alston roll cage. With a LOT of help from my friend Rick Austerschmidt, we installed the roll cage. The car was now much more solid and the tech guys at MAR were happy. With the

increased weight of the roll cage, my times went back up to between 12.60's and 12.70's. I liked it better when it was lighter and faster.

Since most of the cutting and grinding was done, it was time for a little better paint job. In 2000 we started stripping off the paint. Leroy and I had hopes of doing it ourselves. Once we got thru the paint...it was ugly. We made the decision to enlist the help of Leroy's son-in-law, a professional body man. In his spare time over the next couple of years, we replaced and patched sheet metal and got it in primer. October of 2002 it was painted Atoll Blue, a favorite color of mine from the 1970 GTO's.

In August of 2003, I finally got back to the race track. We made several trips to Benton, IL with it, and aside from destroying the 12-bolt rear end, and breaking shifter rail arms, we've had a lot of fun with it. It now has a Danny Miller 9" Ford rear end, 4.57 gears, spool, and 31 spline axles.

Now that everything is complete... the slicks are too old to run, and my safety belts are outdated. It's always something...

Since the writing of this article, my dad passed away. Going through photos for his service, I came upon this picture of him helping me bleed the brakes on the 67 Blue....I forgot to thank my biggest help and the one who influenced me the most.

Thanks Dad.

