

Photos and Story by Nelson

**F**or some it's about tradition. For others it's about speed. For Jimmy White it's both with an emphasis on speed. He likes going fast. Isn't that the first thing that comes to mind when you see a Hemi?

When I approached Jimmy about doing an article on this car, he was actually hesitant about getting any coverage. Jimmy does top notch work on hot rods for a living and he's come a long way since he built this one. He feels that this car doesn't represent the type of work he does now. I think we can all forgive him cause I personally don't see anything wrong with it!

Jimmy's the owner at Circle City Hot Rods in Orange, CA (714-532-6640). I

rolled out to his pad in "Old Town Orange" on a sunny Southern California day just as he was firing up his Hemi to drive to his shop. I hopped in and we were there in an instant. This car is fucking fast! I have to admit that the overwhelming feeling of speed was a bit scary at one point, like the first time I rode in a tricked-out drag car. Lemme put my pen down and let's see what Jimmy has to say:

**How old are you?**  
33

**How long have you been doing this?**

Got into cars when I was young! Got into dirtbikes and cars. Got my first

car when I was 16. You know, built the engine for it. All kinds a stuff.

**So you been pretty much doing this when you first started driving?**

Yeah, built my first engine when I was 16.

**Let's get right into your car... tell me about it.**

The frame's a '37 to '41 Ford frame. It came off of an original hot rod that someone had built in the late 50's. They obviously shortened it, narrowed it. Made it fit the Model A body. It used to have a Roadster body on it that someone did in Texas. I have an early 60's registration on it from Texas. I

**Jimmy White**  
**runs loud**  
**and fast**



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**Where'd you find all the rest of the pieces?**

Just through friends, swap meets. I ran it for a while with the motor that was in it. It had a single four barrel carb, black primer and chrome wheels with white walls.

Anthony Castaneda of the Shifters painted it for me and flamed it. It was black with red flames for a while. I made Lake-style headers for it and made a bunch of changes throughout the years.

It used to have a Mercury '49 - '50 three-speed transmission. I went to Paso Robles in '97 and blew the engine up. At that point I wanted to build the car again as a late 50's or early 60's gasser race car. More street racer style. That's what I've always been into was that street racer style. Going fast!

I put in a different rear end, a '55 - '57 Chevy rear end. I ran across an adapter for a four speed so now it's running a Borg-Warner T10. Jeff Moon helped me build the mill. Skinny Jeff and I built the headers. I wanted my car to look like it was at the A&W drive

in the summer of '62, looking for a drag race. I'm not sure, I wasn't there in '62 but everyone tends to tell me that I succeeded in the look that I was after.

**Tell me more about the motor.**

The motor's an early 331 bored .125 over which makes it a 354. It has an extended bell housing block. I don't know what Chrysler it came out of, it came with the roller when I bought it.

When it blew up, it blew up pretty bad. It had a couple of holes in the block.

I took it to Reath Automotive in Long Beach. They're really famous. Reath's built engines for dragsters and stuff in the 60's. They're still around and they took care of me. I put on 354 heads and a big solid lifter cam. It's also running about 11:1 compression. It's running 6 two's and it's only using the outside four, though it could probably use all six cause when its running good it starts to lean out.

**Why are you so embarrassed of your car, man?!**

Well, it's not what I'm capable of

bought it off a guy in Riverside named Royal. Alex from the Shifters told me about the car, I was collecting parts to build a Roadster at the time while driving my '54 Cad. Royal had put the coupe body on the frame, when I got it off of him it was just a roller and nothing was hooked up. No steering, brakes. Nothing like that. The motor wasn't mounted right, the body wasn't mounted but it was a really good start. I just had to finish the pieces.

**How long ago was this? How long did it take to get it running?**

It was June of '96 when I picked it up. I had it running by October of '96. I did it with a ton of help!



# Traditional Speed



**OWNER:** JIMMY WHITE  
**BUILDER:** SOME GUY IN THE 50'S AND ME  
**OCCUPATION:** WELDER, FABRICATOR, HOT ROD BUILDER  
**CITY:** ORANGE, CA  
**COST:** I DON'T KNOW  
**YEAR:** 1930  
**MAKE:** FORD MODEL A  
**BODY CUSTOM FAB:** ROOF FILLED, CHOPPED 4.5"  
**COLOR:** SILVER METALLIC WITH FLATTENER  
**CUSTOM:** WHATEVER!  
**ENGINE:** 331 CHRYSLER HEMI  
**EXHAUST:** OPEN  
**INTAKE/CARB:** WEIAND DRAGSTAR,  
 OFFENHAUSER SPACERS, STROMBERG 97'S  
**IGNITION:** ELECTRONIC  
**REAR END:** '55-'57 CHEVY  
**SUSPENSION INFO FRONT:** 37 TO '41  
 STRAIGHT FORD AXLE  
**SUSPENSION INFO REAR:** TRANSVERSE LEAF  
 WITH LADDER BARS  
**BRAKE:** REAR ONLY  
**WHEEL SIZE:** 16X6.00 FRONT AND  
 15X8.20 HURST SLICKS  
**SEAT:** STOCK MODEL A  
**DASHBOARD:** STOCK MODEL A  
**STEERING:** VEGA, HOME MADE COLUMN  
**UPHOLSTERY:** OLD  
**INTERIOR EXTRAC:** NOT MUCH  
**GARAGE BUILT STUFF:** HUH?  
**WINDOW:** STOCK FRONT, BLUE LEXAN FOR THE REST  
**TAIL LIGHT:** '39 FORD  
**CLUB AFFILIATION:** SINNERS SOCIAL

# Traditional Speed

doing at my shop. My car's a love/hate type thing. It was the first hot rod I ever built. At the time I didn't really know how to weld, I didn't know how to do anything. I got to learn on this car. It really helped me a lot. I love going to my shop in the morning, grinding metal and welding things together. It's cool. It's fun.

**Tell us about your shop.  
 What do you guys specialize in?**

Well, we specialize in building hot rods. We do all the welding and fabrication. I don't like doing air bags and stuff like that. Just traditional style hot rod shit.



**You got a lotta stuff going on, so we're gonna have to save some shit for a later issue of OSR! Your wife's '55 Cadi and those projects you got going on are pretty cool.**  
 Thanks!

**Any comments on the So Cal scene as far as Hot rods and stuff?**

I love the fact that a lot of people do their own stuff, I think its cool. A lot of these cars are kinda dangerous looking, but so is my car, I mean I have no front brakes - which I don't recommend. Safety is an issue.

Lately, it might just be me cause I'm more into traditional cars but I think people are over chopping, over channeling, just trying to get the lowest possible hot rod look, you know? I don't know if I'm really into that. I've seen some cars at the shows that are pretty scary. I couldn't really believe someone would drive them. My car does look the same way but I know the welds are good.

Hot rodding is definitely alive and well. It always has been out here. I think things are changing though, I see more and more people building traditional cars now.

I remember the first time I went to the Hot Rod Reunion in Bakersfield, I was there with the Shifters, the Chisters

# Topnotch Tattoos

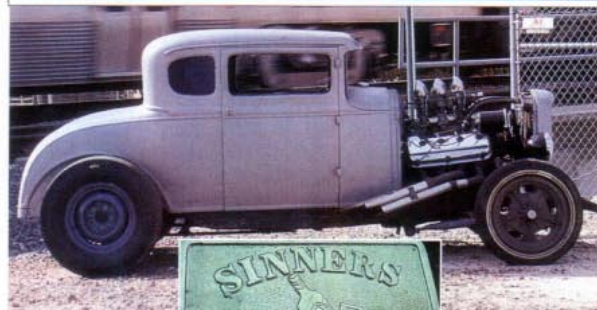
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(aka Choppers Burbank) and a few other friends. There were no other "hot rod" or "greaser" types around then. Cole Foster was there, yeah. He's a Sinner too. But if you go up there now, there's a million cars and many cool hot rods in the parking lot. **People have realized that they can build a hot rod for cheap.** I think the Shifters really helped bring that back. To be honest with you, I really never thought I could own or build a hot rod early on. I was like, how do you do that? I thought it was some unobtainable thing.

**Is it not just about going fast?**

Hahaha I don't know... I think hot rods need to be loud and fast, that's the whole reason for having a hot rod. It needs to be fast. I mean, I don't mind small block hot rods but if I had one, it would be fast and loud!

**Are there a lot of fast hot rods out there?**

There are a lot of guys who have fast cars. Skinny Jeff's Model A pick-up is fast, Alex from the Shifters had a fast '32, the one with the Pontiac in it, that thing was really fast. Kevin Sledge from the Shifters, his T-Roadster with the Cadillac motor is fast. Anthony's bubble top runs good too. Rob Markworth ran 13.0's up in Palmdale which I thought was really good cause he drove it in right off the street. Yeah, there's a lot of guys out there that like speed like I do.

**Who would you like to thank?**

Sinners SoCal! Especially Skinny Jeff, Jeff Moon, John "Candy" Edwards and Rob Fortier. The Shifters, my wife Michelle, all my friends they know who they are. Grant Peterson who works for me and thanks also goes to Fernando



Alonzo, he helps out a lot in the shop. I cant forget Dean "Kid Rocker" Micetich and Rico for selling me my first welder. Bob Brooks and his son Steve - I'll never forget them.

**If you want to get hold of Jimmy call Circle City Hot Rods in Orange, CA. 714.532.6640.**

Tell em' OSR sent ya.

