

f you could color déjà vu silver, purple, and metallic charcoal, then you'd know what I experienced the other night. There I was, riding shotgun strapped in next to Chris Buttera, the son of our very own Lil' John Buttera. (Please don't hold that fact against Chris—or his Novette. Chris' dad did good on both counts.) Anyhow, we were slowly strokin' down Sunset Boulevard on our way to the old Hollywood Freeway when a guy in a Mercedes Benz pulls up alongside and makes the roll-down-the-window motion. He then proceeds to ask us, "Who painted the car?" Now that hasn't happened to me since the days when both Sunset and Hollywood Boulevards vied for top cruising honors. But there we were, and all we could say was, "Fat Jack." "Oh," came the reply, "you mean that smooth-talkin' guy from Hawaiian Gardens?" And before we could say, "The very same," the guy hung a quick right and was gone like the proverbial wind.

But our quick conversation served one point. It confirmed what Lil' John has been telling me for months: "Red is for retardos and only the coolest can get behind the classy, European look."

Not since I subjected myself to a series of burnouts in Rick Dobbertin's "Blue Thunder" have I ridden in a Nova. And like Dobbertin's mechanical marvel, Chris' Novette isn't like just any Nova. It's a real, live, blown, injected, all-alloy, Mouse-powered, Corvette-suspended, '64 SS Chevy II-type Nova.

The SS part should stand for super slick or smoothly subtle. But it wasn't that way when we headed for Hollywood to get

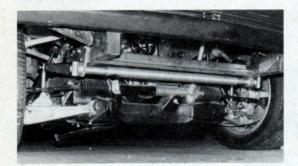
Chris' Novette covered. One of Southern California's infrequent squall lines was peppering the

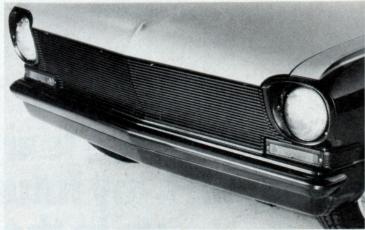
local freeways—as we were negotiating them. It was fun...because everything Chris' father built, adapted, or borrowed actually worked. The head, tail, and directional lights worked. The windshield wipers worked. The horn worked. The B&M blown and injected Milodon motor worked. The Buttera-massaged '84 Corvette suspension worked. The accompanying Corvette power rack-and-pinion steering worked. The steering column worked. The Corvette disc braking system worked. The Corvette radiator worked. The only thing that took the day off was your ol' dad. I was having too much fun moving around on Vic Kitchen's trim job to work.

The reason why all the various elements worked in harmony and unison is twofold: Chris has put 300-plus miles on the car since it was finished and has worked out most of the new-Novette nasties—and Chris' dad is an ol' killjoy. Lil' John told Chris, "I sponsored the engine, I stepped up for the suspension, and I even helped pay for the paint job. And if you break or dent anything . . . you get to pay for it." So Lil' John's admonishment, plus the squall lines, put a damper on our visions of smokey burnouts and sideways-in-the-lights braking tests. But those same factors didn't stop us from cruising the main—just like Chris intended to do with his Novette in the first place. So cruise we did . . . all 60 miles of it in 30-mile increments, to and from the Butteras' lovely, little southeast oasis



NOVETTE







Although this Buttera-built grille—made from 42 ½6x2-inch pieces of 6061 billet strap—follows the feeling of the stock grille, it is one of the Nova's details that's hard to describe.



Construction shot (TOP) shows how Lil' mounted the body roll-resisting anti-sway bar. The bar itself was built by Sander from heat-treated 4340 steel, while Lil' built the mounting brackets and arms from 7075 aluminum.

Chris' Novette was built for cruising, like down the 605 between Cerritos and Los Alamitos. Only the traffic encountered during Easter Week at Balboa Island caused the new/old smoothy to lose its cool.

Stock trunk has enough space for the Steve Davis-built, 18-gallon, aluminum gas tank, Sears' H-D DieHard battery, Kenwood's power boosters, and one of Sander's anti-sway bars.

called Cerritos, California. The day-long experience was most enjoyable.

As it turned out, Chris' Novette-a rare but brightly shining star in its own and original form-was more than a little bit of all reet. Like its body configuration, the ride was both subtle and smooth. The sounds-an ambient collection of B&M blower, Doug Nash 4+1 gearbox, and Cyclone header musicwas every bit as delightful as the engine's wide power band and the closely spaced gear splits. The one thing that might take some getting used to is the closeness of the clutch-to-gasser pedal placement. The Novette's firewall has been drastically altered, which has compromised the placement of the two foot-operated controls; their positioning is practically on top of one another. Surprisingly enough, the drastically altered firewall doesn't let any engine heat in the car . . . again a delightful change. You see, Chris' father has built

some brutal, belly pan boilers in the past. But not the Novette. It's a kool kemp and made more so because the Butteras haven't had time to install the door jamb rubber yet. But what the hey, a real rod is never done.

The only disappointment I experienced that day was that the sun went away too fast and I couldn't shoot any running shots from Chris' dad's parts chaser. But these stance-type running shots will be handled by the time this little ditty goes to press. Meanwhile, I continue to be impressed. For an all-American hybrid, for an eclectic combination of car parts spanning a 20-year time period, for a visual mix of mid-'60 shapes updated with '80s styling elements, Chris' Novette has pulled it off. By the way, remember the guy driving the Mercedes on Sunset Boulevard? Well, he has a fleet of similar cars and he's over at Fat Jack's giving them the Buttera Novette treatment. (continued)



Dual-purpose console—aluminum shell covered by black 'hyde and gray cloth—contains Kenwood equalizer and radio. The opening under the "Nova SS" emblem is what Lil' calls a stuff holder.



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Just for the hey of it, we decided to fall by the local feed lot and weigh the Novette. Total was 2920 pounds "wet," or about 360 pounds heavier than the shipping weight of 2560 pounds back in 1964.

SPEC SHEET/'64 SS NOVA Chris Buttera, Rossmoor, California

ENGINE:

.Milodon V8 fitted with Brodix cylinder heads, B&M Roots-type blower and fuel injector. Built by Racing Head Service

Displacement. ..355 cubic inches

DRIVELINE:

Clutch and Flywheel .. 10-inch steel Hays flywheel and Ram pressure plate contained in Lakewood bellhousing

.Doug Nash 4+1 5-speed Shifter. Hurst .Corvette equipped with Rearend.

CHASSIS:

Front Clip .. Constructed from 11/2x3-inch mild steel rectangular tubing bolted to the stock lower pickup points. Upper tubular supports fabricated from 13/4x.125-inch wall round, mild steel tubing MISCELLANEOUS: bolted to the top of the firewall

3.07 gears

Front Suspension '84, Corvette. SLA forged aluminum knuckle, upper and lower control arms, and cold-formed cross shafts. Transverse filament wound glass-epoxy composite single leaf spring (narrowed ½-inch), augmented by Sander Engineering front sway bar which duplicates stock Corvette rate. Corvette suspension saddle was bolted, then welded, to new, lower

Rear Suspension. .'84 Corvette featuring five-link, fully independent forged aluminum upper and lower control arms, lower transverse tie rod, and rear knuckles. Tu-bular U-jointed driveshafts. Transverse fila ment with glass-epoxy composite leaf spring. Sander Engineering sway bar. John Pierce (Chevrolet Special Products) helped in Corvette-assembly adaption

Shocks Koni adjustable Spindles. '84 Corvette

Steering '84 Corvette alloy rack-and-pinion with integral damping Saginaw pump, light weight compact steering gear

Brakes ...Front: '84 Corvette featuring sliding-head aluminum caliper with nodular iron reaction bracket; pad reaction through bracket, plus 11.5-inch vented, cast gray iron rotors. Rear: Same, except rotors are 8.5-inch cast gray iron. Proportioning valve integral with power-boosted master cylinder

Front: Buttera-modified Wheels. Center Line, 16x7-inch. Rear: Same, except 16x9-inch

.Front: Goodyear 225-50-VR16. Tires Rear: Goodyear 255-50-VR16

MEASUREMENTS:

Wheelbase .9 feet, 3 inches Weight. .2920 pounds Overall Height .4 feet, 4 inches .5 feet, 9 inches Overall Width Overall Length 15 feet Front: Outside-to-outside, 5 Tread Width. feet, 7 inches; Rear: 5 feet, 8 inches

.. Terry Hegman wheelwells, Steve Davis front and rear roll pans, with Buttera-built 3/16-inch aluminum strap grille bars and modified '69 Camaro and '72 Vega bumpers

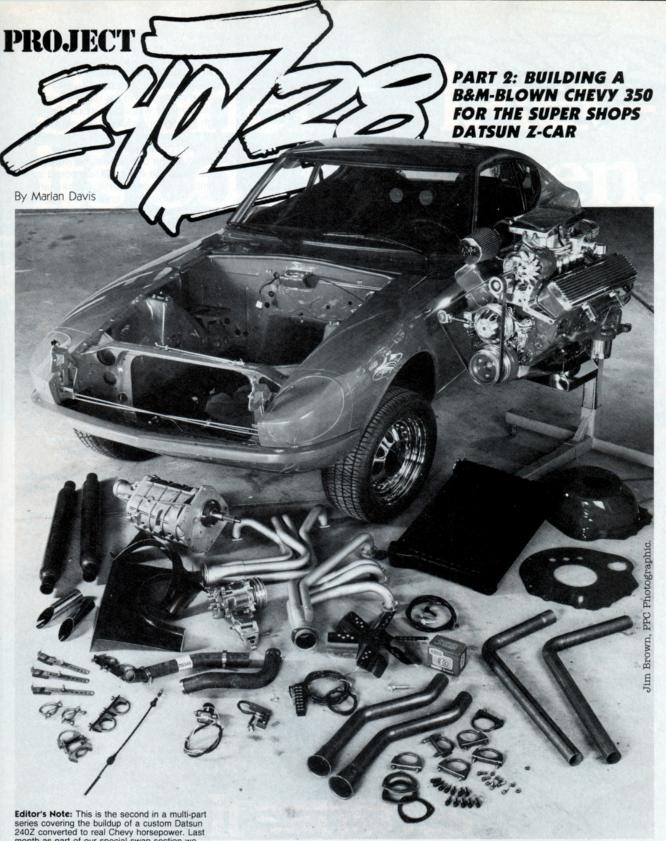
PaintingBy Greg Moreil at the Jack's. Combination is made up of silver, charcoal gray, and purple acrylic lacquer with Dennis Ricklefs pinstriping

......Custom by Pete Morell at Wiring Fat Jack's

...Vic Kitchens-trimmed, Interior . featuring reworked '82 Buick Regal seats, '85 Corvette steering wheel and column, VDO gauges, Kenwood stereo, Vintage Air conditioning, tinted windows, and lots of black and gray vinyl and cloth upholstery

With Special

Thanks To Pete & Jake, Orv Elgie, Fat Jack, Steve Leach, and the boys at Valvoline and Mallory



series covering the buildup of a custom Datsun 240Z converted to real Chevy horsepower. Last month as part of our special swap section we covered the trick Nordskog swap kit. This month we'll look at the actual driveline pieces used for the swap.

hen it came time to execute the "Z28" portion of Project 240Z28, Super Shops owner Harry Eberlin took a coordinated drivetrain approach that delivers all the performance anyone could want, yet at the same time is "realistic" enough for daily use. Power is provided by a fully tricked out B&M-blown and electronic fuel-injected 350 Chevy. The compact B&M blower is set up to provide 6 pounds of boost, and accepts most stock accessories. B&M's new street

fuel-injection system increases fuel economy and allows the blower to fit under many stock hoods. Parts and service are readily available nationwide.

Backing up the engine is a stout Doug Nash 5-speed coupled to a highway-geared 9-inch Ford rearend. The result is impressive off-the-line perform-



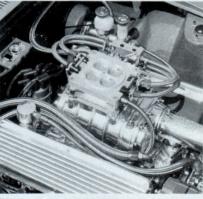
TRW "turbo" pistons, gap-to-fit Ceramic Plus rings, heavy-duty valves, bronze valve guides, and Clevite bearings are just what the doctor ordered for a blower motor, helping to keep compression down and strength up.



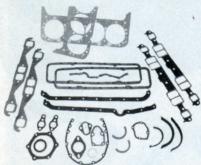
Reliable valvetrain actuation was assured by a Sig Erson camshaft and associated valvetrain components. The hydraulic cam was custom-ground to specs supplied by supercharger manufacturer B&M.



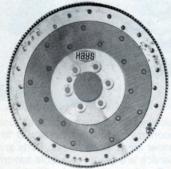
Eddings Engine Rebuilding's well-honed professional crew carefully assembled the blower motor.



B&M's new fuel-injection system delivers crisp performance with respectable fuel economy. Russell Performance aircraft-type stainless steel-braided line and aluminum hose ends were used to plumb the car. Mar-Fab breather hides ugly PCV valve and allows direct hook-up of aircraft line.



Fel-Pro supplied all the gaskets. Set No. 2802 included all necessary performance gaskets needed to completely and reliably seal our high-perf 350 motor.



A Hays lightweight aluminum flywheel helps the engine to quickly wind up into boost. Hays also supplied the rest of the clutch components.



Both short and long-nose water pump systems have been tried out successfully on the Datsun. This photo shows a short-nose water pump setup with sanitary Street Performance polished aluminum billet alternator pulley and bracket. SP also offers similarly designed air conditioning and power steering brackets. Block, alternator, and starter are all color-coordinated to match India Red body paint. Enos Custom Components powder-paints alternator and starter bodies—just send 'em a color sample.

ance coupled with good high-speed driveability. And when combined with the custom rear suspension built by Ken Thurm (see last month's issue) the setup is bulletproof as well.

The starting point for Harry's beefy blower motor was (as it should be) a high-performance four-bolt-main block and forged crank. Eddings Engine Rebuilding hot-tanked the block, performed all the basic machine work, and assembled the engine. They bored the cylinders .030-over, while Crankshaft Grinding turned the crank .010-under. As this was to be a low-compression blower motor, special TRW L2441F-30 blower pistons were used along with extreme-duty TRW Clevite 77 main bearings, Deltawall rod bearings, heavy-duty cam bearings, and double-roller timing chain. TRW's exclusive Ceramic Plus piston rings were specified for their extreme durability and detonation resistance.

The stock rods were first reconditioned, then assembled using high-quality Automotive Racing Products rod bolts. The same outfit also supplied heavy-duty main stud and head stud kits to enable the engine to better withstand the blower's boost. Once the basic machine work was complete, the reciprocating assembly was sent out to West Valley Engine Balancing for balancing.

Also due for special attention was the oiling system. Chevy's basically reliable oil system was further enhanced by a heavy-duty TRW oil pump and Moroso chrome-plated steel street deep oil pan and associated extended pickup.

Late-model 76cc combustion chamber heads were chosen to keep the compression ratio down. Combined with a .025-inch deck and .039-inch compressed thickness Fel-Pro "O-ring" head gasket, compression comes out to 7.65:1. Since the engine was being built primarily for street use, stock-size 1.94 intake/1.50 exhaust valves were retained, although the components were upgraded with heavy-duty TRW components. Slover's Porting Service did the valve job, as well as treating the heads to some minor pocket-porting and gasket-matching.

Street supercharger motors are fairly forgiving when it comes to camshaft selection. Sig Erson's Turbo II grind turned out to be a pretty good match, but to optimize the profile to the B&M blower they slightly modified it to produce a "327 Special" dual-pattern hydraulic profile that features .449 intake/.470 exhaust lift with 292-degree intake/298-degree exhaust advertised duration, ground on 114-degree lobe centers. Also supplied was a new set of lifters, pushrods, valvesprings, retainers,



keepers, rocker arm studs, guideplates, rocker arms, and rocker arm balls.

After assembly of the basic longblock, it was time to install the pièce de résistance-B&M's street supercharger topped by their newly introduced Superjection throttle-body constant-flow fuelinjection system. Not only does this neat new high-tech system offer thoroughly up-to-date, modern looks and enhanced gas mileage and driveability potential, it's low profile also enables the blower to fit under the Datsun's stock low-profile hood (as well as those of late-model 'Vettes, Camaros, and Firebirds). B&M's compact serpentine belt drive and idler pulley allow the use of readily available automotive accessory belts, and are compatible with stock accessory mounting systems. Drive kits to mate with Chevy small-block long or short-nose water pumps are both offered. Either will work on the Datsun.

In keeping with this car's sanitary "high-tech" appearance, project coordinator Mike Johnson scoured the countryside to come up with a complementary conglomeration of functional and dress-up parts that really sets the Z's engine compartment apart from the crowd. The most obvious piece is, of

Competition Unlimited markets polished aluminum wiring looms for stock-type valve covers. To mate with the special two-piece Induction Engineering valve covers, however, Competition made these looms to order, showing the flexibility of a company that's still small enough to respond to special requests.



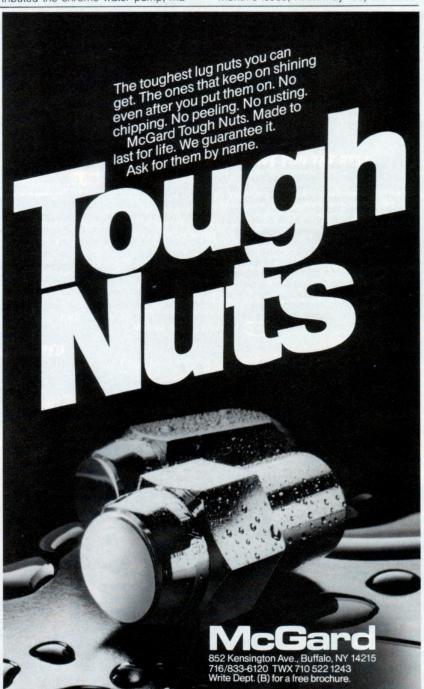
Bulletproof Richmond 3:1 gears, work with a Gleason Torsion diff, and Mark Williams-built 9-inch Ford rear to get the power to the ground.

course, the trick two-piece valve covers manufactured by Induction Engineering. But they're not simply for looks—the tall two-piece design keeps hot oil from dripping all over the engine compartment during valve lash adjustments. Precision Street Rods and Machines' Warren Boughn modified the valve covers to accept welded-on tubes that mate with Mar Fab breather caps. The driver-side breather doubles as the oil fill cap, while the passenger side contains an internal PCV valve and external AN-type male bung that mates with sanitary aircraft-type braided line.

Up front, Mr. Gasket supplied a chrome timing tab, while Milodon contributed the chrome water pump, ma-

chined aluminum pulleys, and cast-aluminum alternator support bracket that supports an alternator powder-painted India Red to match the Z's body and engine compartment color. It and a similarly-painted starter are products of Enos Custom Components. The engine block itself was also painted India Red, using Ditzler Durethane. It was first prepped by Rob Spoon using an initial lacquer thinner washdown followed by Ditzler DP-40 two-stage Epoxy primer.

After B&M "boosts" the mixture into the combustion chamber, a Mallory Unilite electronic distributor juiced by their Pro-Master coil lights the spark. Nordskog's swap kit headers (see last month's issue, HRM May '85) are used





Precision Street Rods and Machines welded tubes to the valve covers to allow use of the Mar Fab breathers. Stainless steel Allen bolts made by Specialty Fasteners were used throughout engine exterior; they offer a bright chrome-like appearance without the embrittlement problems engendered by the chroming of standard steel fasteners.

to exhaust the spent mixture. They and the rest of the exhaust system were first sandblasted, then treated to baked-on VHT high-temp paint. Performed by Valley Enameling, the "baking" process improves the paint's adhesion, minimizing any flake-off tendencies.

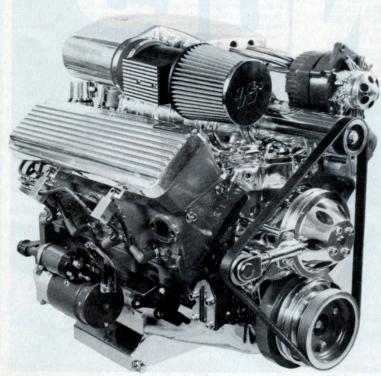
The more than ample power produced by this combination is transferred back to the Doug Nash 5-speed via a Mr. Gasket/Hays aluminum flywheel, clutch, and pressure plate assembly, all safely ensconced inside a Mr. Gasket/ Lakewood scattershield and motor plate. Custom clutch linkage built by fabricator Ken Thurm is used to actuate the clutch assembly.

Shifted by Hurst, the Nash 5-speed features a 3.27:1 first gear, 2.13:1 sec-

B&M's street blower system is compact enough to fit under the hood of most street cars, while allowing the use of (if desired) stock-type pulleys and belts. Polished blower, bonnet, and intake are optionally available right from B&M. Note how all parts work together instead of "clashing." For example, the "ribs" or lines on air filter, computer, valve cover. and fuel pump block-off plate all look like they're part of a coordinated kit-yet each was procured individually, after days of scouring the catalogs. Non-structurally critical parts on engine were chrome plated by Carter Plating.

ond, 1.57:1 third, 1.23:1 fourth, and 1:1 fifth. The greater torque multiplication generated by the Nash's first four gears compared to a traditional 4-speed allows use of a mild 3.00:1 Richmond Gears ring-and-pinion in the Mark Williams-built 9-inch Ford rearend. This mild final drive ratio, in conjunction with the Nash's 1:1 fifth gear, in turn allows reasonable highway cruise economy as well as the option of high-speed banzai runs. The rearend's heavy-duty nodular iron third member also features a trick, state-of-the-art Gleason Power Systems' Torsen limited-slip differential. Torsen's design separates the differential action and torque distribution function of a differential, allowing full differentiation and torque allocation in all traction and turning situations. Billet 31-spline axles (also built by Williams) were required to mate with the Thurm-shortened housing. A Wenco-built driveshaft connects pumpkin to trans.

Installation of this bulletproof American driveline was straightforward with no particular problems, thanks to the Nordskog kit and Ken Thurm's fabrication expertise (again, see last month's issue). It also left only the sheetmetal identifiable as "Made in Japan." But even that was due to receive its dose of American hot rod-ization, as you'll see next month. HR





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