



Reader's Rides Rescued from a Cornfield

Editor's Note: "Reader's Rides" features classic cars that remind us of the good old days. If you have a car you've loved back to life, or photos of the treasure you should have never sold, send us your story and we'd love to share it.

Jeff Sandlin, Barsanco, Centerline, Mich.

1970 Dodge Challenger R/T

ERE: First of all, what are the specs of your special ride?

Sandlin: She is a 1970 Dodge Challenger R/T. It has an all aluminum 588 Hemi with 8/71 blower, two distributors, and 16 spark plugs. It is set to run at 1,200 horsepower on pump gas, 93 octane. On race gas with the blower cranked up with the 400 horse nitrous kit it makes insane horsepower. For a transmission it has a Chrysler 727 with a transbrake, 4,500 rpm stall torque converter. It has a Dana 60 rear end with 4.56 gears.

It has been converted to rack and pinion steering and four wheel disc brakes. The body is all fiberglass except for the roof and rear quarter panels and weighs in at 2,800 pounds.

I tried to make it as quiet as possible by buying the largest mufflers I could. They are stacks off a semi. It didn't work—it will still rattle your brain.

ERE: How did you acquire this brain-rattler?

Sandlin: I bought this car when I was in the Marine Corps living in California back in '82. I started with this



car because I feel they were the toughest muscle cars. It looked so lonely at the end of someone's cornfield.

ERE: So do you show it, race it, or just let it sit in the garage to annoy your wife?

Sandlin: I make it to some car shows when I'm not busy putting the engine back together. The two biggest ones I try to make it to annually are the Mopar Nationals in Columbus, Ohio and the Woodward Dream Cruz here in Detroit.

Every time I seriously blow an engine it comes back bigger and badder than the time before. That happens a lot—I like to beat on it a little. It burst into flames six times in the last few years. I have that need for speed. I think it is crazy people who make hot rods and don't drive them. This one can be quite a handful to drive. I have stomped on the throttle at 40 mph, when the rear tires stick to the ground the front ones go a few feet in the air. I guess that would explain the fingernail marks in

the dashboard on the passenger side. On my next car project I plan to get a little carried away.

ERE: OK, you're avoiding the question of your wife.

Sandlin: My wife has not been in the car since 1985. She says someone must live to raise the kids.

ERE: Be afraid. Be very afraid.

Classic Goes High Tech

For musclecar lovers who may want their wives to ride along, Dodge will ship the new (airbag-safe) 600-horsepower 2008 Viper SRT10 this summer.

According to Dodge, the Viper's dramatic new hood features restyled, functional air extractors. Additional underhood cooling is necessary to bleed off heat from the aluminum block, which has 8.4 liters of displacement. The engine revision package includes new cylinder heads, larger valves and variable exhaust timing, and torque output is increased by 25 ft.-lbs, at 560. The automaker claims 0 to

60 mph in under four seconds; 0 to 100 to 0 mph in just over 12 seconds; braking in under 100 feet; as well as new exterior and interior colors.

The new 2008 Dodge Viper SRT10 boasts more of what performance aficionados crave: kick-in-the-pants, throw-back-in-the-seat power, combined with benchmark braking, world-class ride and handling, a race-inspired interior and bold exterior styling.

While every SRT vehicle offers balanced, overall performance, the heart and soul of the new 2008 Dodge Viper SRT10 is its standout powertrain. For 2008, SRT ups the ante with a new, 8.4-liter aluminum V-10 engine that produces an astounding 600 horsepower and 560 lb.-ft. of torque.

A minor price increase is expected over the current \$86,995, keeping it under the expected six-figure sticker price of Chevy's "Blue Devil."