

GTO of the Month
By George Jeter



I can remember during my pre-teenage years, going to the public library every month to read the latest edition of Hot Rod magazine (and it was not because of the Hooker Header advertisements). As a teenager, I was a five-minute bike ride away from Continental Can Alley in East Baltimore. It was a 1-mile stretch of blacktop sidelined with factories and warehouses, perfect for after hours street racing. This began my fascination with the muscle car. Just before my 18th birthday, I purchased my first car, a 1972 Plymouth Roadrunner. Consequently, before my 19th birthday, it was wrecked and being stripped for parts at the local salvage yard.

Fast forward a few years as my interest in fast sportbikes began to dwindle, I started looking towards the sports car/coupe for satisfaction. After much research and deliberation, my options were narrowed to three choices; C5 Corvette, 350Z, and the Pontiac GTO. I began attending many local car shows and discussing the pros and cons of each with many car enthusiasts. One of the deciding factors, which the other cars could not come close to, was the reclining bucket seats. Unfortunately, once I finally made up my mind, the GTO was no longer being produced and the dealerships were commanding a healthy premium. I was fortunate to find a low mileage, well cared for 2005 GTO, which was located not too far away. It's been a love relationship ever since.



Shortly after the purchase, the modding began. First on the list was the Bassani catback, not obnoxious but a blast at WOT. Current modifications include: Kooks long tube headers with high flow cats, ported and polished throttle bottle, SLP underdrive pulley, Morel lifters, Texas Speed camshaft, Volant CAI, TSW Thruxton (18x8, 18x9.5), Billet Pro Short Shifter, Kirscher Splitter, Spoiler delete, HID's, Spec 2 clutch and debadged in the rear.

As an avid spectator at many racing events, especially drag racing, it was a pleasure to participate in the club sponsored Ray Brunkhorst Drag Day. I was soundly beaten on numerous occasions by the club president, but still left with a smile on my face. Thanks Mark. My son and I enjoyed this event immensely and has put me on a path to destruction since the Goat has seen quite a few time slips since.

On the downside, cam walk caused a broken stock lifter and a scoured camshaft. The result was a ride through the Kentucky countryside without me and a total engine rebuild. In hindsight, a 408 stroker kit would have been nice.



Once the build was completed, it was time to head to the Tail of the Dragon and the Cherohala Skyway on the Tenn/North Carolina border. I managed 8 hours of continuous driving through the Smokey Mountains. In case you don't remember, the Dragon has 318 curves in 11 miles. The roads in the area will take you through elevation changes from as low as 877 feet above sea level to a high of 5,390 feet above sea level. Pure excitement when there's no traffic around.



After a couple of attempts with the Spec 2 clutch, I am still experiencing some disengagement issues. There is a Streetslayer clutch assembly on order from Hendrix-Engineering. It should be installed before the weather breaks.

I enjoy being a part of the GTO family. It's a unique car, which you won't see on every corner or at every stoplight. It will definitely surprise the unsuspecting Charger or Mustang owner and is still a head turner. As mentioned earlier, the seats will recline if you are in need for that occasional nap. (Ask me how I know.)