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**DARRELL ALDERMAN**

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**Mopar**

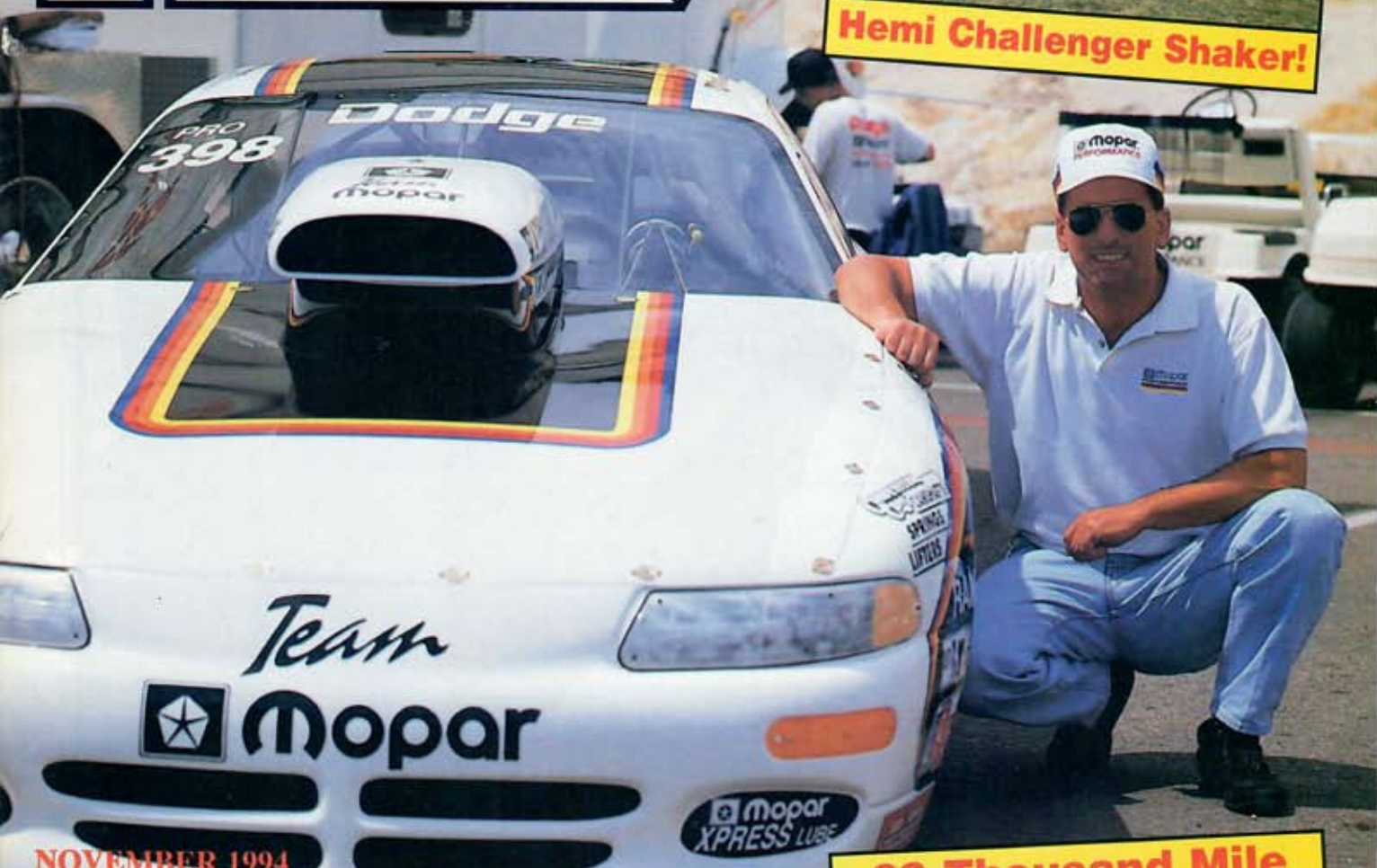
COLLECTOR'S  
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NOVEMBER 1994

\$3.50 U.S. / \$3.95 Canada



Printed In The U.S.A.



**'71 Domino 'Cuda!**

**28 Thousand Mile**



**Unrestored Mod Top!**



# Barracuda Bouquet



**Unrestored 28,000  
Mile Mod Top  
Formula S**

themselves. As such, the Mod Top Plymouth program was aimed at a small, confused market.

Mod Top buyers were, to put it bluntly, rebellious wanna-be hippies. They kinda liked the idea of looking rebellious and devil-may-care, while still getting the reliability of a new car, and a warranty to boot. "True" hippies didn't have any money to buy a car. The hippies weren't impressed and the mainstream new car buyer found them unappealing. But, to a handful of the younger car market, especially younger ladies, it was a very groovy car.

I've always contended that if you could go back and compile a list of original owners of Mod Top Barracudas, you would overwhelmingly find young females as the principle drivers. As such, most Mod Tops encountered today are powered by 318 or slant six engines. Not too many

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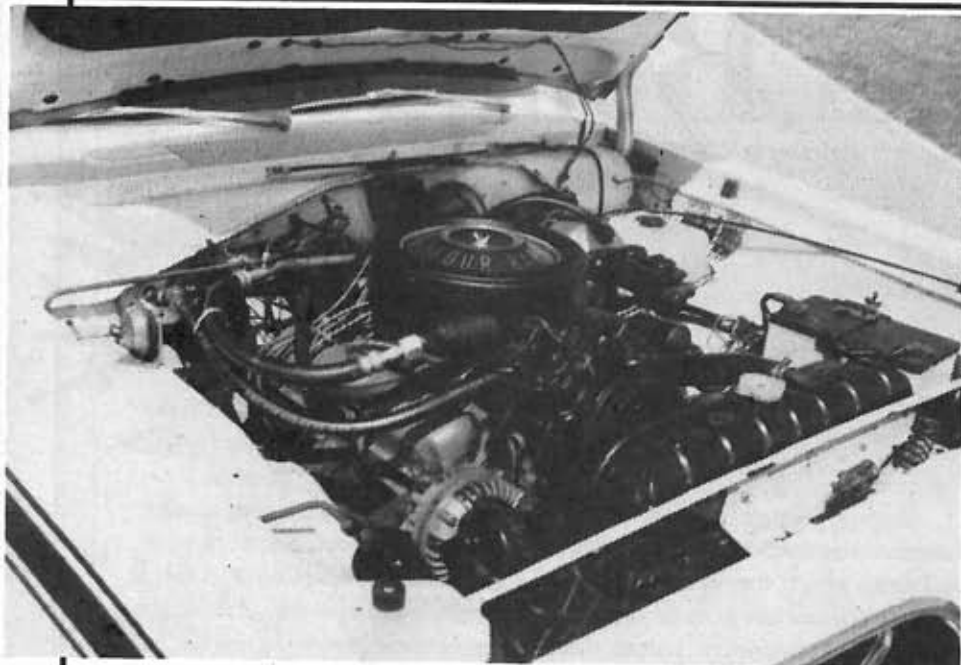
No Mopar speaks more authoritatively of the era in which it existed than the Mod Top Barracuda of 1969. This should have been the official car of Rowan and Martin's Laugh-In and the Smothers Brothers' Comedy Hour. Flower Power was in full bloom in 1969, and by some absolute miracle, the execs at Plymouth decided to make a feeble attempt at capitalizing on the movement. Thus, the Mod Top Barracuda.

From the beginning this option package was a doomed. Granted, hoards of long haired flower children were everywhere, turning on and tuning out to the American way of life, protesting everything from the Vietnam War to eating beef. You remember the type, heck, some of them have turned out to be prominent politicians.

Anyway, the problem marketing to this crowd was basic. Most of them didn't hold steady jobs, ie, they didn't have any money to buy new cars from the capitalistic automakers of this country. Instead, they almost unanimously chose to buy early sixties vintage Volkswagon Microbusses and decorate them with flowers

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fathers wanted to give their daughters real fast cars for graduation presents.

The Mod Top shown here is a rare exception to that rule. This is a Formula S equipped Mod Top car, which means that it came with the potent high compression 340 engine good for 275 horses. Even more intriguing is that it's an unrestored machine. Everything you're looking at, with the exception of the tires, is factory original equipment!

Richard Heidbreder of Lohman, MO, has a real affinity for locating and collecting immaculate original Mopars. His 15 car collection of low mileage, unrestored examples included an AAR 'Cuda, a

440+6 Superbird, a '68 GTS Dart, a Plum Crazy Road Runner convertible, and a '69 Formula S convertible. The car featured here is one that Richard had been hot on the trail of since 1982.

This Barracuda popped up for sale in Hemmings and sounded too good to be true - a 24,000 mile, garaged all its life, mint condition original still in the hands of its original owner. Ordered by Goddard Chrysler/Plymouth in St. Louis as a demonstrator and showroom crowd drawer, it was as such, loaded. It may have drawn a lot of curious looks at the dealership, but it didn't sell until late in the year when the '70 models were on the way.



Much to Richard's dismay, the Barracuda had already been sold. After a little coaxing, Richard was able to get the name of the new owner, Charlie Schmade of Indianapolis, IN. Charlie had no intentions of selling, and the car remained with his small collection of fifties and sixties cars.

Richard was undeterred and remained in constant contact with Charlie through the years, eventually becoming rather chummy with him.

Finally, in August of 1993, getting on in years, Charlie decided to sell off much of his collection and called Richard. Other than just washing the car and putting on a set of reproduction redline tires, Richard has done absolutely nothing to this car. Top to bottom, this Barracuda is as clean as it was the day it left the dealership. Even the original Firestone redline spare tire appears to have not been touched since it was put there by a factory worker in 1969!

Remember when we said this was a well optioned car? If the 340 Formula S with a Mod Top and interior isn't enough, it also has power steering, power brakes, air conditioning, and an AM/FM radio - just about everything you could have gotten on this model.

Interestingly, the Plymouth brochures from 1969 list the flowered top and interior as separate options. The "Floral Roof Treatment" package listed for \$96 and the "Floral Interior Package" listed for \$113. Although we've never seen a Barracuda that didn't have one without the other, apparently it was possible to order one that way.

The Mod Top option was not strictly limited to the 1969 Barracuda coupe, as is popularly believed. Satellites in 1969 could be had with a similar treatment done in shades of blue and green, and we have seen 1970 Barracudas with yellow flowered vinyl tops! They were never plentiful, even when new. Fewer still exist.

This particular flower power Barracuda continues its life of leisure in Richard's collection, and aside from an occasional car show, it stays safely tucked away to continue its immaculate state of preservation. Not that we've seen them all, but this is by far the finest unrestored Mod Top car we've come across, and Richard fully intends to keep it that way!



