

NorCal Classic

Rescued from a certain rusty graveyard, Brad Martin's sensational turbo/EFI powered '57 Volksrod now cruises the windy foothill roads of Central California in style!

BY BRUCE SIMURDA

Photos by Michael Kellogg

At 70 years old, Placerville, California's Brad Martin is no stranger to the VW scene. It all goes back to his junior year in college, when he purchased a 1965 Beetle from a dealer in Walnut Creek to commute 60 miles each way. That was 1966, and as Brad described his Bug, "That was a stalwart vehicle. It even ran 75 miles when it blew a hole through the case on the San Ma-

teo Bridge! I eventually traded it for a '68 Squareback, and I have been hooked since." More recently, Brad retired from teaching after 33 years, and is now the Senior Volunteer Captain with California Highway Patrol - Placerville office — where they also hold a yearly car show.

Over the years, Brad has owned over 23 VWs, and his most recent design concept was to build a wild '60s drag car that looks similar to the Fiat Topolinos of the time. In

the original plans it was never meant to be a cruiser, but we all know how plans change during a project. So he put the word out that he was looking for an Oval sunroof, and was soon contacted by Drew English of German Autowerks in Placerville. The car was purchased in Loomis, California with no engine or trans, had been hit hard on the right front and rear, and had been rolled. The pan was totally rusted and the bottom one-inch of the body and doors were corroded away.



Model: Lauren Hunter

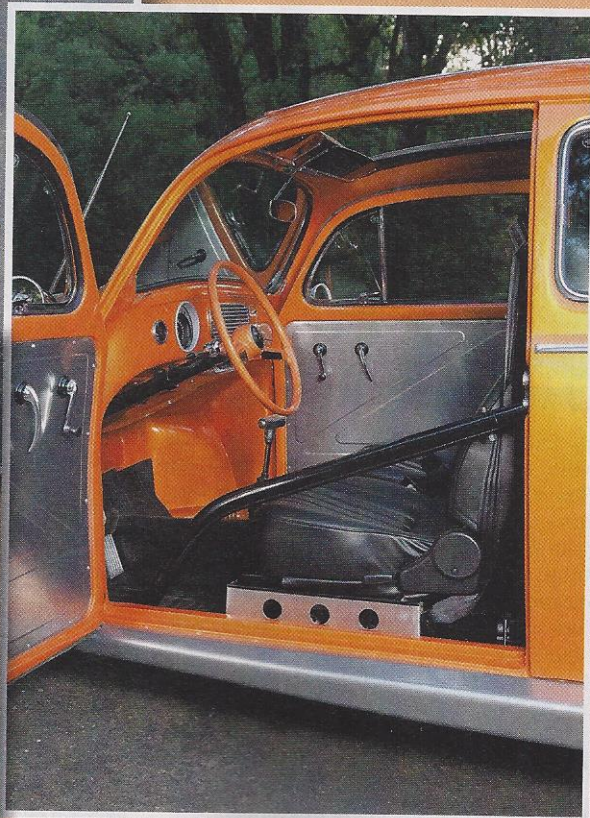
LEFT, Brad's ride may have started as a '57 rust bucket, but with initial fabrication by Ivan Wright, followed by custom metal fabrication by Legend Motor cars and finish bodywork/paint at Auto Center of Roseville, the transformation is amazing. **ABOVE**, turbo/injected 1915cc engine was assembled at Two Larrys Racing.

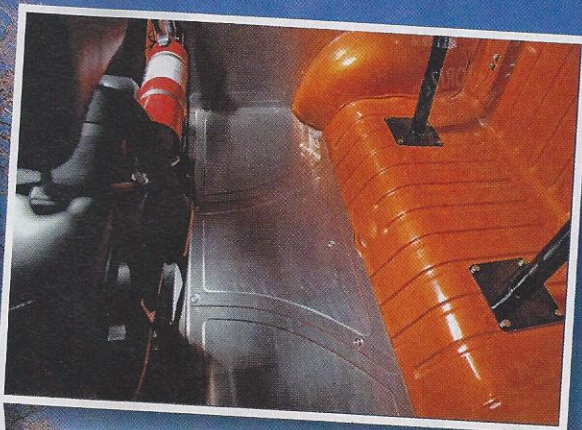
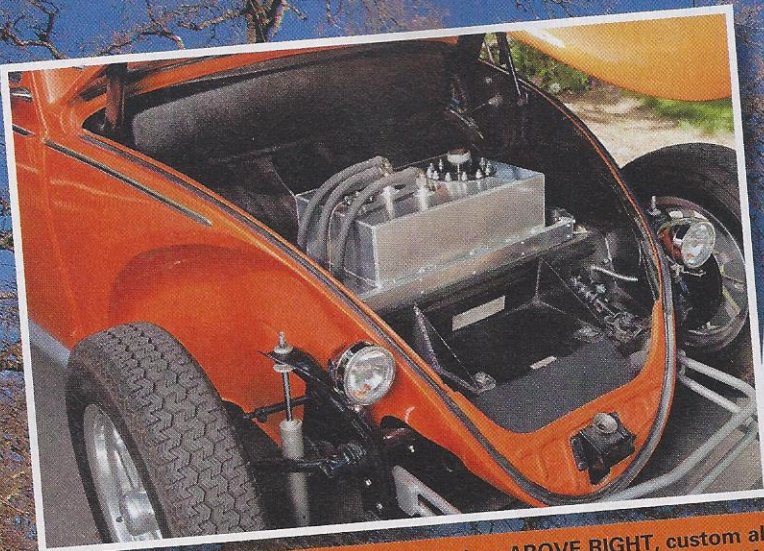
As Brad put it, "To the purists who get upset about Volksrods, this particular car was saved from certain death."

Once in his garage, a complete teardown ensued, with every nut and bolt removed. With so much rust the pan was useless, so a '70 chassis was located and reworked. With help from Two Larrys Racing in Placerville, the ball-joint beam was moved forward 8 inches, (with an extended steering shaft), equipped with 2-1/2-inch drop spindles, and topped-off with disc brakes. Front shocks are CE 3, from Low Bugget in Orange, California. The rear received Sway-A-Way 27mm torsion bars, Porsche CV-joints, axles and stub axles. Two Larrys Racing also added a rear 4130 3/4-inch sway bar made by Ron Lummus Racing in Anaheim. Working on the body, the initial fabrication was handled by Ivan Wright in a home garage. Modifications include the obvious removal of the fenders and smoothing the inner panels. For custom metal work, including adding a turbo scoop and exhaust cut-out to the left rear fenderwell, fabricating custom running-boards, and custom bumpers (patterned after an early Meyers Manx), Brad went to Gary Smith at Legend Motor Cars in Placerville. Finally, finish bodywork and paint were handled by Troy Costa at Auto Center of Roseville. Troy used PPG Shop-Line 3-stage (color, pearl, clear) in a custom mixed color (silver and Gold Pearl).

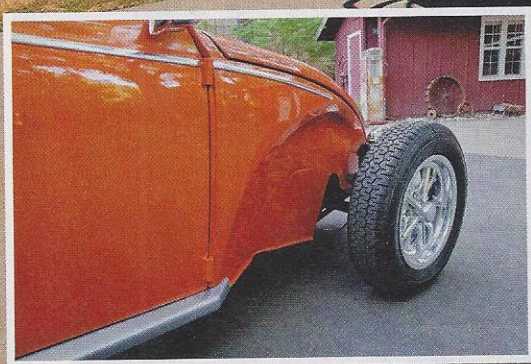
Brad refers to his interior as "drag style", with a Ron Lummus Racing 5-point roll cage and aluminum panels replacing the rear seat. The interior is definitely neat and clean, with no carpeting (rubber mats cover floor and tunnel), and aluminum door and rear seat panels fabbed by Big Wig Race cars in Austin, Texas. Front seats are Scat Pro 90, heav-

Inside Brad went "drag style," with a minimum of upholstery, aluminum door panel, rubber mats in place of carpeting, and Scat Pro 90 seats covered in Mercedes Tex Vinyl by Santana Interiors. Rollcage is and RLR.





ABOVE, fuel cell came from Summit Racing. ABOVE RIGHT, custom aluminum panels replace the rear seat. BOTTOM, front end was moved forward 8 inches by Two Larrys Racing, who handled all pan and suspension work. BELOW, wheels are from Rocket Racing — fronts are Launcher and rears are Injector. Motorcycle headlights have integral turn signals.

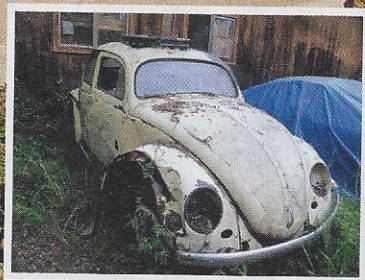
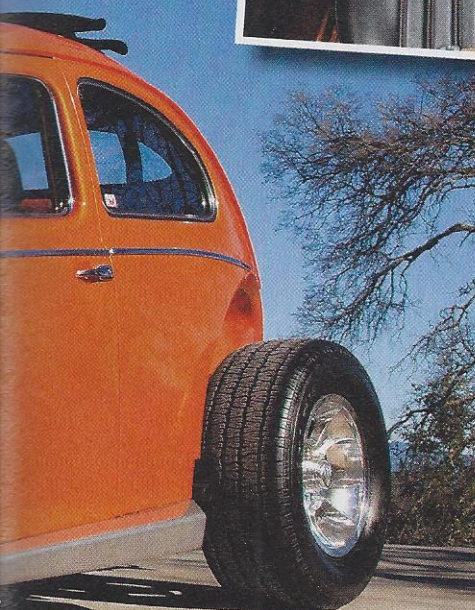


ily modified by Santana Interiors in Placerville, California with black Mercedes Benz Tex Vinyl with orange stitching. The seats have adjustable headrests, and are equipped with Simpson harnesses. The nearly stock fully painted dash is stuffed with a VDO electronic speedometer in custom surround, fuel gauge, and RetroSound stereo with single RetroSound full range speaker behind beautifully chromed Oval grille. Not choosing an aftermarket unit, the original steering wheel was restored and painted to match the body. There is also a black Mercedes Benz Tex headliner and black Stayfast canvas sunroof to complete the interior package.

As the idea of a '60s drag car look was unrelenting throughout the build, the engine had to follow the same theme. For that, Brad had Gary Herrod, at Two Larrys Racing, assemble a turbocharged 1915cc mill that would surely get everyone's attention on the track. With an estimated 300 horsepower, some of the key components used include a DPR counterweighted 69mm crankshaft, JE 94mm slipper skirt forged pistons in thermal coated cylinders from Goulds Pro Cylinder Heads in Placerville, Low Budget's LBC 2 cam specially ground to builder's specs, CB Performance 044 Super Mag CNC-ported heads with stainless steel 40mm intake and

35.5mm exhaust valves, dual springs and 60cc chambers, an EFI turbo system from CB Performance with Magna Fuel and Magna Spark management systems, and tuck-away turbo exhaust system, also from CB Performance. Complementing this engine is a '71 IRS gearbox built by Ken Porter at Porter Precision in El Dorado Hills with a 4.12:1 ring and pinion, close ratio 3rd and 4th gears, Erco billet side cover, Super-Diff and more.

While this custom rod was coming together, more and more details were added. An American Autowire wiring harness was installed by Dave Ehrlich at Autotrend EFI in Diamond Springs, California, along with



TOP, near stock dash features VDO speedometer in custom surround, fuel gauge and RetroSound stereo. **ABOVE RIGHT**, turbo scoop, exhaust cut-out, custom bumpers and more were added by Gary Smith at Legend Motor Cars. **ABOVE LEFT**, this is how Brad found his Oval — not far from the grave!

custom glass by Breaker Glass, motorcycle headlights with integral turn signals (from Todd Cycle in St. Joseph, MO), '39 Chevrolet LED taillights, custom bumpers, and a Summit Racing fuel cell installed under the hood. Both front and rear wheels are from Rocket Racing — the fronts are their Launcher series while the rears are Injector — and the rubber that meets the road is Michelin up front (1665SR15 XZXS) and BF-Goodrich rear (P275/60R15 Radial T/As).

Brad received a lot of assistance over the two-year build, and besides those already mentioned he would like to thank Drew English at German Auto Werks in Placerville for

rack time and engine tuning, as well as Raul at West Coast Metric for miscellaneous parts and great help.

As you can imagine, Brad has won many show awards with his one-of-a-kind Volkswrod. But none of those accomplishments mean as much to Brad as the enjoyment he gets out of watching his 10-year-old granddaughter, Alexa, hook up the racing harnesses and going for a ride through the local foothills. As he puts it, "I have tried my best to corrupt her mind in favor of VWs — she has wrenched on plenty of them!" Definitely, there will be more VW projects in Brad's future.

ENGINE/1971 TYPE 1

DISPLACEMENT/1915cc

BUILDER/Gary Herrod, Tow Larrys Racing, Placerville, CA

CASE/VW AS41, magnesium, 10mm head studs, shuffle pinned

CRANK/DPR 69mm, counterweighted, balanced, 8 dowels

RODS/Super Race H-beam, VW journal, 5.400-inch

PISTONS/JE 94mm, slipper skirt forged, cylinders thermal coated by Goulds Pro Cylinder Heads

CAM/Low Budget LBC2, special turbo grind to builders specs

CAM GEAR/CB Performance, straight-cut

LIFTERS/30mm, lightweight

PUSHRODS/chromoly .058-inch-wall, JayCee billet tubes

ROCKER ARMS/forged, 1.3:1 ratio

HEADS/044 Super Mag CNC Round

Port, 40x35.5mm stainless steel valves, dual high-rev springs, chromoly retainers, Supergrip valve locks, 60cc chambers

COMPRESSION RATIO/8.0:1

VALVE COVERS/Vintage Claude's Buggies, aluminum

OIL SYSTEM/full-flow system with Schadek 30mm flat cam oil pump, Derale Performance oil cooler, 2-quart Wide Glide sump, Lucas 30W oil with zinc additive. Mann T-4 filter

INTAKE SYSTEM/CB Turbo fuel injection system, Magna management system

IGNITION SYSTEM/Magna Spark crank trigger w/coil pack, Magna Spark wires, NGK plugs

EXHAUST SYSTEM/CB Performance turbo system

FLYWHEEL/forged, 12-lb., balanced, 8 dowels

CLUTCH/KEP 1,700-pound pressure plate, Kush Loc disc

HORSEPOWER/300 (estimated with 18-lbs. boost)

SPECIAL MODIFICATIONS/Clyde Berg breather, Porsche engine sealer,

TRANSAXLE/1971 IRS

BUILDER/Ken Porter, Porter Precision, El Dorado Hills, CA

RING & PINION/4.12:1

GEAR RATIOS/ 3.80:1 1st., 2.06:1 2nd., 1.48:1 3rd, 0.88:1 4th

SPECIAL MODIFICATIONS/Erco billet side cover, Super-Diff, welded 3rd & 4th gears, Bosch starter