

RAD-HOT VOLKSROD

Words: Paul Knight
Photos: Michael Kellogg
Model: Lauren Hunter

Brad and Joyce Martin have transformed a rusty, bent '57 Oval into one of the sweetest Volksrods we've seen in quite some time. Paul Knight finds out more about the journey from junkyard dog to show'n'go beauty!

The whole Volksrod thing has really boomed in recent years, and we love the diversity of this scene. In short, anything goes, and there are no fixed rules or pigeon holes. That said, we have noticed that rat-rod style tends to be more popular than the 'show and/or go' theme, hence we were pleased to see that Brad Martin had opted to go both shiny and fast with his pearlescent-orange Volksrod.

And before the purists begin to balk at the idea of hot-rodding an Oval window Bug, we should probably explain that, like the lowlight Ghia in this issue (see page 52), this car was beyond straightforward restoration yet Brad saved it from certain death!

When Brad found the Bug in the back of a yard in Loomis, California, it was in a pretty bad way. He described it as, 'hit hard on the right front corner and in the rear, and showed signs of being rolled over at some point, too'. He continued, 'It had no engine or transmission, the floors were totally rotted out and the bottom inch of the doors and body were rusty, too'. All in all, not the best basis for a straight resto... but the perfect basis for a custom resurrection, like this!

Brad explained that the concept for this build was based around the question, 'What if the '60s drag racers had used a VW instead of a Fiat Toppolino?'. To find out, Brad called in experts to help him achieve the level of finish he required.

Initial body fabrication (and repair) was tackled by Ivan Wright. This includes not only

It makes a pleasant change to find a Volksrod that isn't flat black or 'rat-rod' styled - we love it!

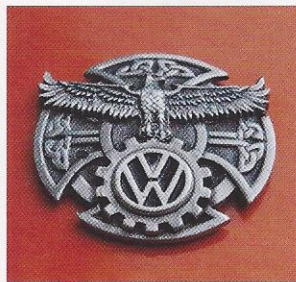






Above: As it was found... crashed, rolled and rusted out. Brad saved this car from the crusher, and created one cool ride!





replacing the rotten chassis with a later ('70) 'pan, but also reshaping and smoothing the inner wings etc. We've grown so used to seeing heavily-chopped Volksrods that it's actually quite refreshing to see a 'stock height' roof, but we think it really works well with the overall style of this car. Later body mods (including the trick turbo scoop in the rear valance/left-hand rear inner wing and the running

boards and bumper bars) were handled by the guys at Legend Motors in Brad's hometown of Placerville, CA. The final paint was applied by Troy Costa of The Auto Centre of Roseville, and that custom-mixed, pearlescent orange paint really pops in the sunshine!

All of the mechanical work was handled by Gary Herrod of Two Larrys Racing and includes the fitting of the 8-inch beam extender kit and lowering the

stock-width front beam by 2.5-in. Other mechanical tasks covered include the fitment of 2.5-in dropped spindles and Chevy-pattern disc brakes to accept those cool Rocket Racing wheels.

A Ken Porter-built pro-street transmission with close ratio third and fourth gears and Porsche-sourced CVs/axles in readiness for a turbocharged/EFI 1914cc motor. An AS41 case has been

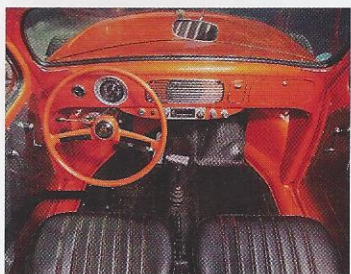
Above far left: Engine is a hot 1914cc unit fitted with electronic fuel injection and a blow-through turbocharger kit

Above left: Aluminium panelling is by Big Wig race cars

Above: Custom fuel cell resides beneath the bonnet. Note high-pressure fuel supply and return lines for the fuel injection system

Below: Nudge bar is a one-off piece





machined to accept 94mm barrels/pistons and stronger 10mm-diameter head studs. It was also drilled and tapped for full-flow oiling, shuffle-pinned and drilled for a 'sand-seal' pulley kit.

CB Performance 044 Super Mag CNC-ported cylinder heads are fitted and the 40x35.5mm valves are operated by an LBC3 camshaft via Manton pushrods and 1.3:1 ratio rockers. Deeper inside the motor you'll find a

counterweighted DPR 69mm crankshaft (8-dowelled to a 12lb flywheel), CB Super Race H-beam rods (5.400-in) and CB straight-cut steel gears etc.

But, it's the goodies such as the MagnaSpark crank trigger ignition kit and the CB EFI (electronic fuel injection) and blow-through turbo kit that really make this motor sing! And, with a welded fan keeping the heads cool and a Derale Performance oil cooler, Wide-Glide deep sump and a Clyde Berg breather box, this

combo runs cool and is very reliable (and fast, of course!).

Moving inside the 'rod, Brad has fitted a pair of seats supplied by Santana Interiors and a Ron Lummus racing 5-point rollcage. There's also a custom gauge cluster (with GPS speedometer) and a set of Big Wig Racing aluminium panels, which finishes things off perfectly.

Brad's plan is simply to drive the car, have some fun and hit some shows... one lucky guy! **UVW**

Far left: Unusual detailing of the stock steering wheel works well. Note also the digital gauges and retro-styled CD/iPod/radio unit

Above centre: '39 Chevy tail lights and neat, curved rear valance are nice touches. We love this view!

Above right: Seats were supplied by Santana Interiors. Note the glossy interior metalwork, too

Below: Rocket Racing wheels really suit this car. Front tyres are 165s, rears are fat 275/60R15s

