

FIRST LOOK – All-New "Dick Harrell" Supercar!

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BY BARRY KLUCZYK

When it comes to the Camaro, there are fans, enthusiasts and ardent collectors—and then there's Matt Murphy. Murphy channeled his passion and reverence for the Camaro into his company, GMMG, which he established five years ago with the idea of bringing back dealership-built muscle cars using what he calls the "best performance car."

Murphy's connections within GM allowed him to create performance packages that worked with emissions and vehicle warranty standards, because the factory folks were telling what he could and could not get away with. By working closely with the Camaro marketing team, GM Performance Parts and the GM Performance Division, GMMG has turned out the impressive Berger-edition Camaros, Dale Earnhardt-edition Intimidator SS Camaros, Tom Henry-edition Camaros, ZL-1 Supercars, and other unique, dealer-special editions.

The cars all have become instant—and expensive—collectibles and most have been chronicled extensively in the pages of *SUPER CHEVY*, but that all came to end when GM turned out the lights at the St. Therese, Quebec, Canada, assembly plant.

Or, so we thought.

Quietly, GMMG, with the help of Berger Chevrolet, was able to squirrel away more than 30 brand-new, unsold, untitled '02 Z28 and SS cars through the end of 2002 and early 2003. They were acquired from dealerships across the country, all of them hardtops or T-tops, both automatics and six-speeds. We saw them at GMMG's facility in mid-2003, actually, and asked what was up.

"We've got one more big project planned," Murphy said, before clamping up. The wide-body car seen here is the result of that project—a last hurrah for Camaro as a wild, seemingly race-ready tribute to the late Chevy performance icon Dick Harrell.

Harrell, aka "Mr. Chevrolet," started with renowned Yenko Chevrolet and Nickey Chevrolet, before eventually settling in Kansas City, Missouri, to build and race special 427-powered Camaros. Although his career was relatively short—he died in a 1971 racing accident—he nonetheless left an admirable legacy for Chevy performance, which helped push Berger

Dick Har



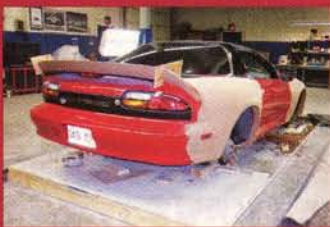
rell Supercar

A "new" Camaro Tribute to the Late "Mr. Chevrolet"



Dick Harrell Supercar

Chevrolet and GMMG into crafting their final Camaro project (the Dick Harrell Edition Supercar) but it also seemed a logical extension of the ZL-1 Supercar program from a couple of years back.



Those ZL-1s were undoubtedly unique but they've got nothing on the flared bodywork of the Harrell-edition cars. The wide-body look is patterned after the Sunoco-blue/Penske show car (a modern interpretation of the famous blue-and-yellow '69 race car driven by Mark Donohue) built a few years ago for the Woodward Dream Cruise. For the Harrell-edition cars, Murphy wanted to emulate that bulging-muscle look and, figuring it wouldn't hurt to ask, he inquired at GM as to the possibility of using the body kit for his project. Even though the Woodward car was a one-off and no extra pieces were to be had, "we were surprised by GM's enthusiasm for the idea," said Murphy.

All the right people, including Chevy's Scott Settlemire and GM Performance Division's John Heinrich, helped push through GM's bureaucracy to get the dimensions for the body panels.

Murphy also credits GM designer Kip Wasenko, who penned the Woodward car, with some design assistance. Because the Woodward car was a quickly built, mostly hand-



assembled car, there were no fender dimensions stored on a computer or leftover molds. The handbuilt fenders' dimensions weren't exactly identical from side to side, either, meaning a laser scan of the car wouldn't be useful.

In the end, the dimensions were determined old-school style: GMMG supplied a red, stock Camaro, which was parked next to the Woodward car in a studio where Randy Wittine and a crew of GM designers and modelers added clay to the red car, shaping and measuring it until it matched the contours of the original show car. From there, molds were made and fiberglass production pieces were popped.

All the new body parts are fiberglass, except the hood's outer skin and the gas cap; they're carbon-fiber. The front fascia and front fenders are bolt-ons, while the rear fender extensions are bonded to the original steel fenders. The cowl hood top section is bonded to a stock lower hood section and a fiberglass rear spoiler also are part of the exterior package—well, that and a new fuel filler door, which was needed because the stock one wouldn't open correctly in the fatter rear fenders.



Other exterior styling cues including the carbon-fiber-look graphics and the appropriate "Mr. Chevrolet" script on the rear spoiler.

