



SCRATCH-BUILT METAL FENDERS

Metal Man Randy Ferguson Creates a Set of Willys Fenders

All this cornering performance will be somewhat unique to the Willys, as these drag-racing icons are not known for doing much more than going straight. We plan to change that. One criterion for the Buildoff is that all three cars must feature an out-of-the-box crate engine, which means the Willys will have a new Mopar 5.7 Hemi, backed by a Mopar 45RFE transmission. Although the Hemi is the lowest-horsepower engine, rated just under 400 hp, the power-to-weight ratio of the Willys is substantially better than that of the 502-powered Chevy or the 550hp Mach 1.

Some of the manufacturers and parts people involved include: JEGS High Performance, DuPont Hot Hues, BFGoodrich, Hot Rod Air, Cherry Bomb, Dynamat, U.S. Radiator, Lokar Performance Products, Flaming River Industries, Painless Performance, SoffSeal, Classic Instruments, Eckler's, Technostalgia, Custom Autosound, Totally Stainless, Trim Parts, Spal USA, Crow Industries, Specialty Power Windows, Rocky Hinge, Hedman Hedders and Woody's Trunk Panels. Woody's Hot Rodz will be responsible for the building of all three cars.

Which car will you be rooting for? We suspect the Willys will fare very well, so stay tuned and see for yourself. For additional information on the '55 Chevy, check out our sister publication CHEVY RUMBLE (CHEVY RUMBLE, Feb. '07). For tech information on the '69 Mach 1 Mustang, see our sister publication SUPER ROD (SUPER ROD, Feb. '07). **SRB**



Photography: Randy Ferguson

Words: Christopher Sordles, as told by Randy Ferguson

Although replacement fenders are available for many makes and models, including Willys, Woody's Hot Rodz employed the services of metal craftsman Randy Ferguson to produce a set of rear fenders for Gary Anderson's '40 Willys. Over the last 10 years, Ferguson has made everything from an entire '41 Willys to a pair of aluminum Z11 fenders.

First we need to introduce a couple of important tools required to produce accurate reproduction body panels: wireworm/Bondo copy bucks and flexible shape patterns. The wireworm/Bondo copy bucks are made by using 1/4-inch hot roll rod, bent to the contour of the inner side of an original panel (whenever possible). The rods are kept approximately 1/4 inch off the surface of the panel at 6- to 8-inch intervals. This basically creates a very strong webbed structure. With the rods in place and welded together, the wireworm is temporarily removed while the inside of the panel is waxed, acting as a release agent

when the Bondo is applied.

After applying a couple of coats of paste wax, the wireworm is placed back inside the panel and 2-inch-wide bands of Bondo are applied along each side of the rods. Around the perimeter of the panel and in areas where it may be used as a hammerform, fiberglass-reinforced body filler is used for added strength. This will allow for flanges and the like to be formed directly over the buck, for an absolutely guaranteed match to the original. The primary use of the buck, though, is to ensure that the panel has the correct shape and form. As the panel nears completion, it is fit to the buck, ensuring there are no areas where the panel is either high or low. This is referenced by the stations of the buck to the inner surface of the panel. Since the buck was taken directly from the inner surface of an original panel, the replacement panel needs to fit tightly against each station of the buck for a perfect fit.

camionet