

FIRST LOOK: **HURST** CONCEPT T/A



► Production versions of the Hurst Concept T/A are called Hurst Edition T/As and can be purchased turnkey from Trans Am Depot and Hurst Performance Vehicle dealers. The Hurst T/A logo was designed by Kevin Morgan.



TRANS AM DEPOT AND
HURST PERFORMANCE
VEHICLES COLLABORATE
ON A MODERN-DAY
TUNER TRANS AM

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PHOTOGRAPHY BY KEVIN DIOSI

The Hurst name embodies a legacy of speed and beauty that goes far beyond the legendary shifter line it produces. There was also Hurst Performance that built the Hurst Olds, Hurst Hemi 'Cudas and Darts, and, of course, the Hurst SSJ Grand Prix among others. Currently Hurst Performance Vehicles is producing its own versions of the Challenger, Mustang, Camaro, and Viper.

When Tod Warmack of Trans Am Depot closely examined the T-tops he and Kevin Morgan helped develop with Convertible Builders of High Springs, Florida, for the Kevin Morgan-designed T/As, he realized how much they resembled the Hurst Hatches, which were installed in '76 to mid-'78 Birds. The visual connection sparked the idea of a Trans Am Depot-built Hurst T/A.

In August of 2010, Tod approached Hurst Chairman Nate Shelton with the idea, and he green-lighted the project. Fortunately, since Trans Am Depot has exclusive rights from the

SCCA to use the Trans Am name, there would be no legal wrangling to stall the program.

About a month later, Paul Teutul Sr. of Orange County Choppers contacted Trans Am Depot regarding the company's offerings. By the end of the conversation, Tod and Kevin had committed to building Paul a T/A, and Paul was planning to build three choppers to provide two-wheeled custom representations of the three models that Trans Am Depot sells—a '69-style "6T9" Goat, a '69-style "6T9" Trans Am, and a '77-'78-style "7T7" Trans Am, all of which you

first saw in the last issue (Tribal News). A two-part *American Choppers* episode on the Discovery Channel would cover the bike builds, as well as the T/A build and presentation to Paul.

Planning progressed on both projects, and in January of 2011 it dawned on Tod that if Trans Am Depot actually built the Hurst Concept T/A for Paul, there could be a three-way tie-in between Trans Am Depot, Hurst, and Orange County Choppers. Nate was soon onboard with the idea and Paul needed no convincing. He asked Tod, "Are you talking about Hurst, as in the shifter? I don't even

have to think about that... that's a no-brainer."

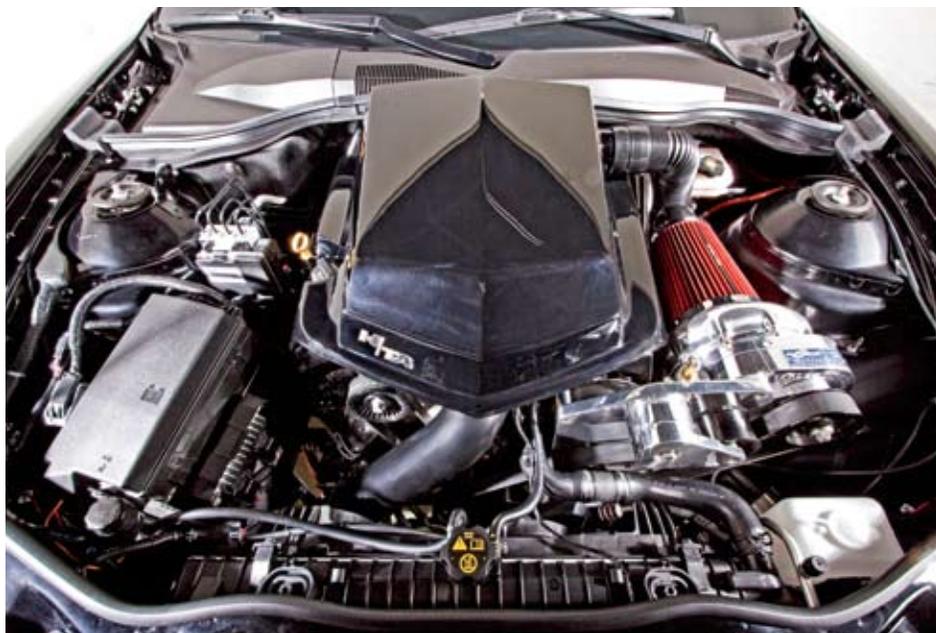
"The Hurst concept car we built for Paul Sr. is the result of months of planning, designing, and consulting with Nate and Hurst Performance Vehicles President Don Swanson," Tod says. The idea was to build a new T/A that had many design and style elements of a '78 Trans Am.

Bodywise that goal was already accomplished, as the functional Shaker scoop, fender air extractors, front and rear fascias, rear spoiler, side ground effects, rerouted exhaust with side-exit splitter tips, Xenon HID headlamps, and LED custom turn signals used on the 7T7 T/As were already patterned after that body style. A custom Hurst graphics package designed by Kevin was added to differentiate it as the Hurst T/A as opposed to the 7T7.

Adding the optional T-tops required additional bracing under the car and in the roof channel to maintain body integrity. The latest wheels, machined faced Snowflakes, were designed by Kevin and are manufactured by Evod Industries. They measure 20x10 in front, 20x11 in the rear, and are shod with Pirelli PZero 275/40/ZR20s and 315/35/ZR20s respectively. Hurst style wheels will be optional on production models.

To make the most of all that rubber, an Eibach Antiroll Sway Bar Kit was installed and augmented with an optional Pro-Street-S Eibach Coil-Over Kit, which allows the T/A a 2-inch drop in ride height for a more

► The concept was painted with Sikkens water-based urethane and 2000 Autoclear, and received the "color-sanding" option. Production Hurst Edition T/As retain the factory paint where applicable, and are offered in black with gold accents, white with gold accents, and silver and black with red accents.



▲ With a P-1SC-1 ProCharger, Pypes stainless headers and exhaust, and a dyno tune by South Georgia Corvettes in Thomasville, 540 rwhp was extracted from the 6.2-liter LS3 engine.

► **Blevins Upholstery wrapped the entire interior in optional two-tone leather. Tod says of the complementary camel-tan French stitching, "It gives the interior a definite modern-day throwback look."**

aggressive appearance and to improve handling.

The LS3 now features an optional P-1SC-1 ProCharger, running a 3.8-inch pulley to provide 8 psi of boost, and Pypes stainless headers and 2.5-inch exhaust. A Hurst Billet/Plus II shifter ensures the power is transferred smoothly through the Tremec TR 6060 six-speed trans to the 3.45-geared rear.

Inside, Kevin and Tod collaborated with Chance Blevin's of Blevins Upholstery in Brooksville, Florida, to create the new optional interior. Desiring a plusher look and feel, the engine-turned panels of Morgan's 7T7 T/A have given way to two-tone camel-tan and black leather covering all the surfaces. Tod and Kevin agreed that the pattern of the '78 seat upholstery was the most appealing to their eyes, so they went with it.

After all the meetings with Hurst, and work with fabricators and suppliers, the T/A was ready to debut. It's coming out party was at the



Kevin and Tod collaborated with Daniel Burns from Gauge Marks in Randleman, North Carolina, on the design and execution of the '77-to-'78-style refaced gauges.

World of Wheels in Boston in April 2011, where it was shown with its matching Orange County Chopper's custom motorcycle, along with the other two Trans Am Depot cars and bikes. Soon thereafter it was presented to Paul. "I like everything

about it—the way it looks, accelerates, and handles," he told Tod.

All of which is understandable considering the fact that Paul's Concept Hurst T/A is a stunning machine to begin with, but is also loaded with options, including a

supercharger (\$9,850); headers and exhaust (\$1,300); Eibach coilover suspension (\$2,100; Eibach 1-inch drop springs are standard); full leather-wrapped interior (\$7,500); '78-style leather seats (\$3,500); CNC-engraved Hurst T/A logo calipers



(\$450); T-tops (\$7,500); and upgraded Clarion stereo system with 10-inch sub woofer and amplifier (\$2,600). Add to that the turnkey price for the standard Hurst T/A package and the total climbs to \$101,285. Don't get too blown away by the price of the concept—the standard equipment Hurst Edition will sell for \$69,985, including the price of the Camaro SS.

With the concept completed, Trans Am Depot and Hurst Performance vehicles are gearing up to sell Hurst Edition T/As. Don Swanson commented on the success of the program this far: "We at Hurst Performance are blessed to have a strategic partner in concentrating on maintaining the Hurst name and brand in such an excit-

ing time in this emerging market. What Trans Am Depot has brought to the table is very exciting. The company is able to maintain the very delicate balance of diversity and performance in its vehicles. While Tod and Kevin could have hastily gone to market and sold many units, they opted to build concept cars and do the rigorous testing and refining first, hence, providing an excellent foundation of a proven product that will meet the expectations of today's very educated buyers."

If you believe you are one of those educated buyers and you have the funds to afford what promises to be a very exclusive ride, the Hurst Edition T/A may be just what you are looking for. **HPP**



▲ Camaro seats were reupholstered with camel-tan leather inserts and piping to resemble the '78 Trans Am motif. Two-layer, anodized-billet sillplates by Zenith Industries of Gainesville, Florida, feature the Hurst logo, as does the custom embroidered floor mats, seats, and console. Zenith also produced the billet H/TA badges.



PHOTO PROVIDED BY TRANS AM DEPOT

▲ Paul Teutul is quite pleased with his new Hurst T/A. He told Tod, "I drove up to the Mercedes Benz dealership and the place emptied into the lot to see it. The reaction to the Hurst T/A has been incredible!"



▲ A Revolution reverse-lift Trans Am hood shows off the Screaming Chicken, and provides the backdrop for the Orange County Cycle's custom "Trans Am" motorcycle that was built as a two-wheeled tie-in with the Hurst Concept T/A.



▲ Note the motorcycle's taillights resemblance to the rear of the Trans Am.

SOURCES

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