

# STREET SHAKER

BY CHUCK VRANAS

## Blaine Schmidt's '57 Chevy Shakes it With Big-Block Power



◆ Brought back to life by the team at Boot Hill Auto, Blaine Schmidt's '57 dazzles with details that include a flawless body coated in FM Harbor Blue gloss, cranked down stance thanks to RideTech, and tasty rollers from Bon Speed.

**W**hen you've spent the majority of your life as a mover and shaker on a football field it's easy to see that what you drive would easily translate to cars possessing a certain aggressive edge. For Blaine Schmidt of Erin, Ontario, Canada, spending 12 years playing pro ball in the Canadian Football League as an all-star offensive lineman helped set the pace for his passion of high-performance V-8s.

Growing up in a small town in Northern Ontario, Blaine got his initial influences hanging out on Main Street on Saturday nights. There with his friends, he'd watch muscle cars tear it up from light to light, often dreaming what it would be like to rule the 'strip.

Building scale models and reading countless publications helped fuel the fire till he and his brothers, Bevin and Brent, got ahold of their grandfather's small-block-powered '67 Chevy Impala. The rest was history, as he launched into a world of Bow Tie muscle, which would span decades.

After retiring from the Canadian Football League, Blaine decided it was time to expand on his automotive interests. He opened Boot Hill Auto, a 26,000-square-foot full-service restoration and fabrication shop capable of taking on entire builds from design through completion. Running the shop allowed him to not only tend to his client's needs, but to also continue work



on his own projects. Early influences often remain in the back of one's mind ready to surface, and for Blaine it was an image of a particular '57 Chevy. One day on the way to the shop he passed by a local farm and noticed a derelict '57 Bel Air sitting in a field and stopped to check it out. Seems the farmer had taken it in as payment for a job and had left it out in the elements. Even though the car had seen hard times and had obvious rust issues, Blaine envisioned its rebirth as a hopped-up pavement pounder so he made a deal and hauled it back to the shop. After a full evaluation by the team at Boot Hill, it was torn down to bare bones to get started on the build.

◆ A Progressive Automotive chassis lets the car handle like it's on 'rails while rubber by Falken keeps it planted, and plating by Cambridge Chrome adds plenty of vibrance.

◆ Underhood a 572ci big-block crate V-8 from Chevrolet Performance was loaded with go-fast goods. A forged 4340 steel crank and H-beam rods capped with 9.6:1 forged aluminum slugs add power while fuel flows through a Holley 750-cfm carb.





♦ It's hard to mess with a classic factory interior so Blaine refitted the car with fresh threads from CARS Inc. Custom touches include Classic Instruments dials, a wood grain steering wheel, and Vintage Air for comfort.

Since the original frame was destroyed by decades of damage from the elements, it was tossed and a call was made to Progressive Automotive in Baltimore, Ohio, for one of their fine-tuned custom spines. Starting with 10-gauge steel the frame was fully boxed and treated to tubular crossmembers. To plant the car firmly to the ground out back a fresh Ford 9-inch rear filled with 3.73:1 gears and 31-spline axles were suspended in place by an adjustable triangulated four-link with RideTech ShockWaves, complemented by an antiroll bar and Panhard bar. For razor-sharp handling up front Progressive's signature IFS features tubular upper and lower control arms combined with 2-inch dropped spindles, RideTech ShockWaves, antiroll bar, and power-assisted rack-and-pinion steering. If you're planning on going fast, you'd better plan on stopping too. A Corvette dual master pushes fluid through stainless lines to massive

Baer 13-1/2-inch drilled and vented discs at each corner with Baer 6S six-piston calipers for bite. For plenty of aggressive attitude anchoring the chassis to the pavement, a set of Bon Speed Wild Thang 20-inch wheels were capped with low-profile rubber by Falken.

Blaine wanted both dependability and off-the-line performance, so he placed a call to Chevrolet Performance and sourced one of their potent 572ci big-block crate engines with 620 hp to do the job. Starting with a fresh Generation VI block, it was filled with a forged 4340 steel crank linked to matching H-beam rods topped with forged aluminum 9.6:1 pistons while a hydraulic roller cam sets the thump. Rectangular port aluminum heads breathe deep through a Chevrolet Performance tall deck single-plane intake topped with a Holley 750-cfm carb. A TREMEC TKO500 trans pushes power rearward through a custom driveshaft while spent gases roar through

AP Exhaust Technologies Xlerator stainless mufflers.

Shifting focus on the body, decades of abuse had ravaged the sheetmetal so a call was placed to CARS Inc. to order up replacement fenders, rear quarter-panels, rockers, and floor pans. With the fresh steel installed the body was massaged to perfection by the team at Boot Hill and made razor sharp. To give the car a dramatic look Blaine selected RM Harbor Blue and had team member Cam Buchanan load his spray gun to lay down the vibe. Wanting to keep the business office tidy a call to CARS Inc. supplied them with a complete interior in complementing blue vinyl and fabric with matching carpet. Navigation moves through a classic wood grain steering wheel while a custom shifter handles gear choice and cool breezes are by Vintage Air with vitals monitored through Classic Instruments. Blaine now stalks the boulevard in his own street shaker reliving the past, and that's just plain bitchin. 



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**COMP** Tech Tips  
Performance Group

### COMP CAMS Never Install Rockers Dry

Rocker arms must be lubricated during initial startup with the proper lubricant to avoid permanent damage. A generous amount of COMP Cams Valve Train Assembly Spray (PN 106) on each rocker arm, pivot ball, bushing pushrod tip, and valve tip can prevent damage to new parts. The COMP Cams special Valve Train Assembly Spray is the protection you need against premature wear.

### FAST What is an IRM Number?

IRM counts the number of errors in the RPM or tach signal coming into the EZ-EFI computer. The errors are typically caused by electrical interference from the ignition system, alternator, or any other high-voltage or high-amperage devices on the car. In a perfect world, the IRM should always be at 0. In the real world a low number, such as less than 10, is pretty typical on a good installation. The lower the number the better. If the number is over 20 a re-routing of wires to eliminate interference is most likely necessary.

### INGLESE Steps to Synchronization Success

Inglese flow tests every carburetor to ensure synchronization before shipment. However, if your Weber carburetor needs to be adjusted, the idle screw adjustment on each barrel is a simple procedure that can be easily done with a synchrometer carburetor synchronizing tool. Simply place the tool over each stack, one at a time. Adjust the male and female screws on the bottom until the synchrometer reads the same for each. Once your Weber carburetor has been synchronized, you can adjust the idle speed by turning a single screw in or out. The location of the master screw varies according to system type. However, on all V-8 and V-6 systems there are only two carburetor-mounted speed adjusting screws—one for each side.



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Building scale models and reading countless publications helped fuel the fire till he and his brothers, Bevin and Brent, got ahead of their grandfather's small-block-powered '67 Chevy Impala. The rest was history, as he launched into a world of Buick Wildcat, which would span decades.

After retiring from the Canadian Football League, Blaine decided it was time to expand on his automotive interests. He opened Root Hill Auto, a 26,000-square-foot full-service restoration and fabrication shop capable of taking on entire builds from design through completion. Running the shop allowed him to not only tend to his client's needs, but to also continue work



◆ A Progressive Automotive chassis lets the car handle like it's on rails while rubber by Falken keeps it planted, and styling by Cambridge Chrome adds plenty of vibrance.

◆ Underhood a '572ci big-block crate V-8 from Chevrolet Performance was backed with go-fast goods. A forged 4340 steel crank and H-beam rods capped with 92ci forged aluminum slugs add power while fuel flows through a Holley 750-cfm carb.

on his own projects. Early influences often remain in the back of one's mind ready to surface, and for Blaine it was an image of a particular '57 Chevy. One day on the way to the shop he passed by a local farm and noticed a decrepit '57 Bel Air sitting in a field and stopped to check it out. Seems the farmer had taken it in as payment for a job and had left it out in the elements. Even though the car had seen hard times and had obvious rust issues, Blaine envisioned its rebirth as a hopped-up pavement pounder so he made a deal and hauled it back to the shop. After a full evaluation by the team at Root Hill, it was torn down to bare bones to get started on the build.



◆ It's hard to miss with a classic factory interior so Blaine refitted the car with fresh Firebirds from 1965-66. Custom touches include Classic Instruments dials, a wood-grain steering wheel, and Vintage Air for comfort.

Since the original frame was destroyed by decades of damage from the elements, it was tossed and a call was made to Progressive Automotive in Baltimore, Ohio, for one of their fine-tuned custom spines. Starting with 10-gauge steel the frame was fully boxed and treated to tubular crossmembers. To plant the car firmly to the ground out back a fresh Ford 9-inch rear filled with 3.73:1 gears and 31-spline axles were suspended in place by an adjustable triangulated four-link with RideTech ShockWaves, complemented by an antiroll bar and Panhard bar. For razor-sharp handling up front Progressive's signature IPS features tubular upper and lower control arms combined with 2-inch dropped spindles, RideTech ShockWaves, antiroll bar, and power-assisted rack-and-pinion steering. If you're planning on going fast, you'd better plan on stopping too. A Corvair dual master pushes fluid through stainless lines to massive

Baer 13-1/2-inch drilled and vented discs at each corner with Baer 65 six-piston calipers for bite. For plenty of aggressive attitude anchoring the chassis to the pavement, a set of 16-inch Speed Wild Thing 20-inch wheels were capped with low-profile rubber by Falken.

Blaine wanted both dependability and off-the-line performance, so he placed a call to Chevrolet Performance and sourced one of their potent 572ci big-block crate engines with 620 hp to do the job. Starting with a fresh Generation VI block, it was filled with a forged 4340 steel crank linked to matching H-beam rods topped with forged aluminum 9.6:1 pistons while a hydraulic roller cam sets the thump. Rectangular port aluminum heads breathe deep through a Chevrolet Performance tall deck single-plane intake topped with a Holley 750-cfm carb. A TREMEC TKO500 trans pushes power rearward through a custom driveshaft while spent gases rear through

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### Tech Tips

#### COMP Cams

##### Never Install Rockers Dry

Rockers must be lubricated during initial startup with the proper lubricant to avoid permanent damage. A generous amount of COMP Cams Valve Train Assembly Spray (PT-200) on each rocker arm, pivot ball, locking pin/bush, and valve tip can prevent damage to new parts. The COMP Cams special Valve Train Assembly Spray is the protection you need against premature wear.

#### PART

##### What is an IRM Number?

IRM counts the number of errors in the RPM or tach signal coming into the ECU computer. The errors are typically caused by electrical interference from the ignition system, alternator, or any other high-voltage or high-amperage devices on the car. In a perfect world, the IRM should always be at 0. In the real world a low number, such as less than 10, is pretty typical on a good installation. The lower the number the better. If the number is over 20 a re-routing of wires to eliminate interference is most likely necessary.

#### INSTALLER

##### Steps to Synchronization Success

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