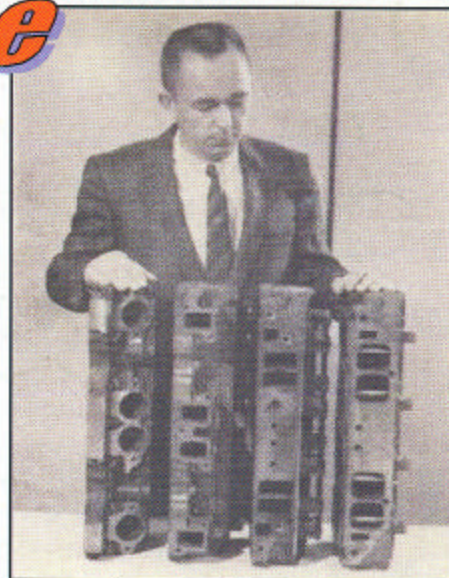
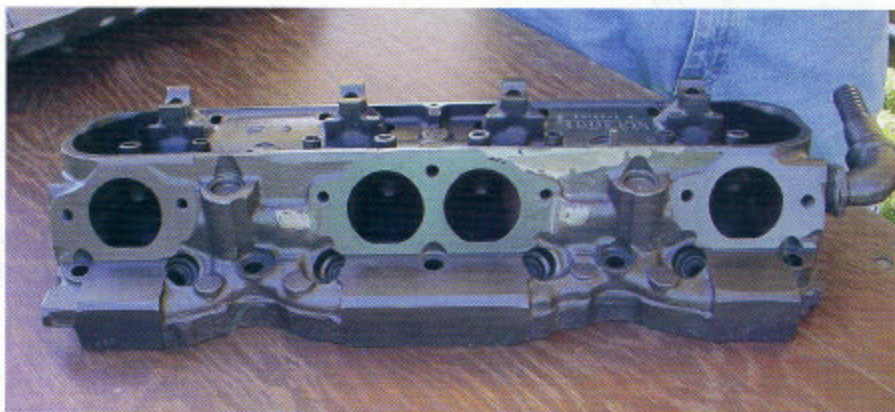
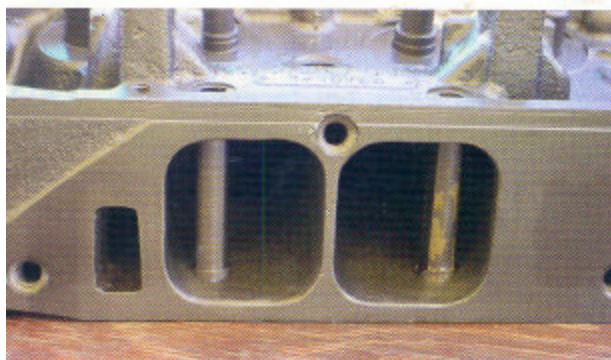
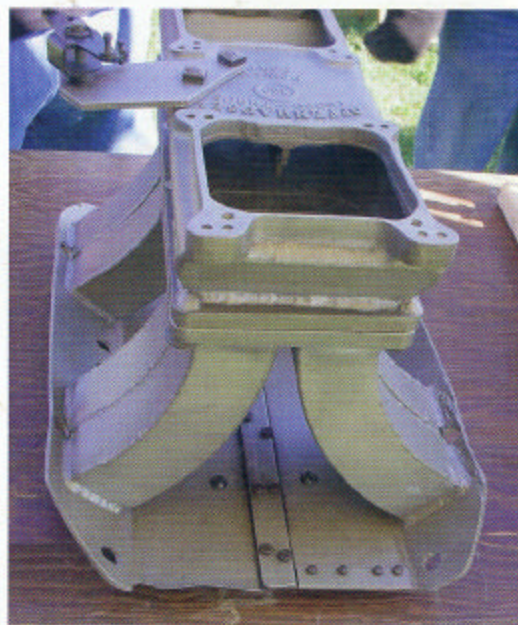


## *Buick History at the BPG Nationals*



*Above shot taken from Hot Rod Magazine back in 1970. A younger Dennis Manner 36 years ago with the same Buick heads that he was re-united at this past BPG Nat, shown below and on the left.*



# The Buick Performance Group

Buick Performance Group  
1150 West 5<sup>th</sup> Street  
PO Box 614  
Marysville, Ohio 43040-0614

## Buick Performance Group Mission Statement

The Buick Performance Group (BPG) is a non-profit membership organization dedicated to the performance, preservation, maintenance and restoration of Buick powered performance cars. The BPG offers a member focused, family oriented community environment that encourages and promotes: (1) the sharing of information; (2) the development of new products; and (3) interaction and participation between all members.

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The Buick Performance Group is a non-profit, member run organization. We value all input from our members, and would love to include your car, tech tips and any article that you would take the time to submit to us.

To submit an article or your car for a feature, mail your information and pictures to this address:

**Buick Performance Group**  
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PO Box 614  
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All written inquiries and payments to the B.P.G Club be made out to: Buick Performance Group

[www.Buickperformancegroup.com](http://www.Buickperformancegroup.com)

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## ***Where Do We Go From Here***

*John Schmidt - Chairman*

The 2006 BPG Nationals are in the books and we all had a blast. I would like to thank those who put forth the extra time and energy to make this another successful club function. Yes, car count was down and yes, spectator attendance was up. All in all, how do you measure a successful event? Did we make any money – no. Did we lose any money – no. Did we have a good time? Yes indeed.

The buzz throughout the event was "What about next year, what's happening for 2007? Is Quaker City going to be sold? If so, are we moving to another track? Where? Where? Where? When, When, When?" It is no secret that Quaker City Dragway is up For Sale. The track has been For Sale for several years and it was announced earlier in 2006 that this year was the last year it would be run by the current management. As of last week that management assured the BPG they would be racing at Quaker City Dragway in August 2007. So where does that put the 2007 BPG Nationals. Do we continue the family atmosphere at Quaker City? Do we look for another location that will give us a home for many years to come? Do we pursue combining the Buick Horsepower Nationals (Indy) and the BPG Nationals and only have one late summer event? Those are just some of the unanswered questions the Board of Directors is facing. Throughout the rest of the year you will get answers. Answers that will take into account your input from the BPG forum. So lets hear from you, ALL OF YOU.

For those of you that weren't able to make it to the 2006 BPG Nationals, don't worry. The 2007 BPG Nationals will be here before you know it. Regardless of the location you can be assured there will be plenty of good times ahead. After all, the BPG is all about HAVING FUN.

## ***Cover Shot***

*Rick Martinez – Editor*

This past BPG Nationals we had a very special guest, Dennis Manner. Dennis was the assistant chief engineer at Buick during the 1960's and 1970's and is often referred to as "the father of the 455 engine". Also on display was the Buick 455 4-bolt main block, recently purchased by Brad Conley, Duane Heckman and Mark Reeves. If that wasn't enough for you Buick fanatics, we also had a pair of experimental Stage 2 tunnel port heads and intake on display.

After Dennis's talk about the Stage 1 & Stage 2 programs there was to be one more surprise. Dennis had brought with him an invoice sheet on experimental 455 engine parts and part numbers that he had helped design back in 1970. As it turned out these same heads were part of a "complete" engine package originally delivered with this particular 4-bolt main block. Some of these parts were also the same pieces that were shown in the May 1970 issue of Hot Rod magazine. So it was a surprise indeed as Dennis was re-united with the engine that he help design some 35 plus years ago!

Now this all does not end here as there is some talk that this engine was fully assembled and running 10 second times back in the early 70's when it was installed in a Skylark bodied drag car. No doubt Duane Heckman and a few others are searching the archives regarding the history of this car and how this engine survived all these years to finally return home to meet it's creator. We will be keeping you all posted on upcoming issues on the history of this engine build-up.

On behalf of the BPG and its members I would like to thank Dennis for sharing the stories, his knowledge, and most of all just being himself, a great Buick guy. Thank you Dennis!

## ***Special Thanks***

I want to take this opportunity to specially thank Beth and Dana Andrews for their generosity in providing the club with the event tickets.

A special thanks also goes out to John Perrins (a.k.a. Radius Kid) for his voluntary efforts in raising additional sponsorship monies and his personal donations.

To Mike Phillips of Automotive Machine and Performance (AM&P) for taking the time out of his busy schedule to show up and vend at the last minute. Mike was carrying the torch for Buicks at the PHR Engine Masters Challenge.

Finally to Dan Strezo of DLS Performance. The DLS sponsorship arrived at the BPG office during the event causing DLS to be left out of the announcements and program. The BPG offered to return the money but Dan graciously donated the money to the club.

Not to be forgotten a huge thanks to Mike Atwood and Patty for the many great shots taken during the event. Both Mike and Patty took hundreds of great photos during the event.

THANKS TO ALL.

John Schmidt  
Chairman

## ***Quick Recap***

*Rick Martinez - Editor*



I would like to say first to all the winners and participants of this event on behalf of the Board of Directors we would like to congratulate you all, and most importantly, thanking you all for your support! You guys and girls are truly the best!

The 3<sup>rd</sup> annual BPG event is now long over and now in the history books. The Club has gone a long way in just a few years surviving some scary restructuring along way along with some growing pains. In the end the BPG survived and is growing strong each passing year. The huge thanks is not to the Board of Directors, but to you all, the members! You all helped make this happen.

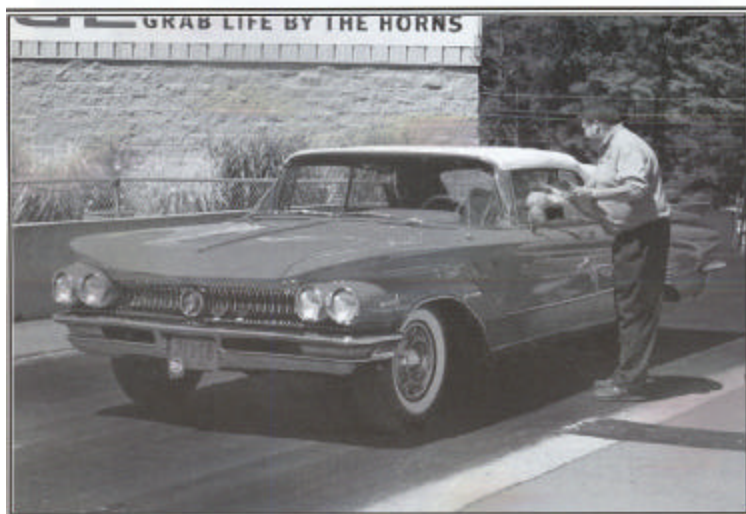
For the 2006 year, we all were unfortunately hit with the high gasoline prices, forcing most of us to decide on which Buick event to attend. Unfortunately just about every Buick event for the 2006 year took a hit on attendance with one reason being the high cost of gas. Another reason for the low attendance is that there are too many events for a relatively small group of enthusiasts. What can be done? Well the BOD has been working hard behind the scenes on improving this event. We have listened to complaints and we are taking steps on addresses these complaints. For the 2007 BPG event we can

promise you all it WILL be better than the previous years, as we feel what we have in the works will greatly enhance this event. I promise you all there will be some major changes for the 2007 event.

The newsletter...yes it is way late! Guys all I can say is, "Sorry". The one big reason is the material to put inside the newsletter. If I don't have the material I am basically dead in the water on completing the newsletter. We have been getting some input from members and that is greatly appreciated, but what material we get is still far and few between. Come on guys! You all own Buicks and stand proudly behind your cars, show them off by letting us know about them. Building or restoring a Buick...come on, send us the info. We want to know about it, and no doubt other members will be interested too! Remember guys this is your club and we want to hear from you all.

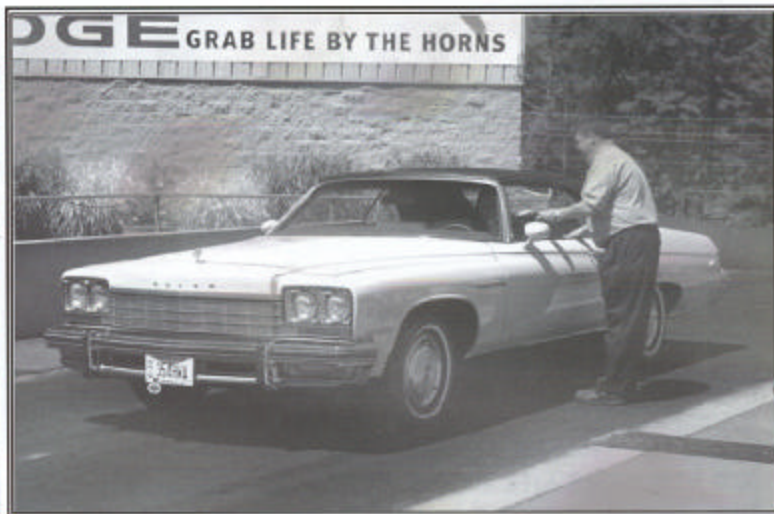
# 3rd Annual BPG National Car Show Awards

## Gold Winners Concours Class



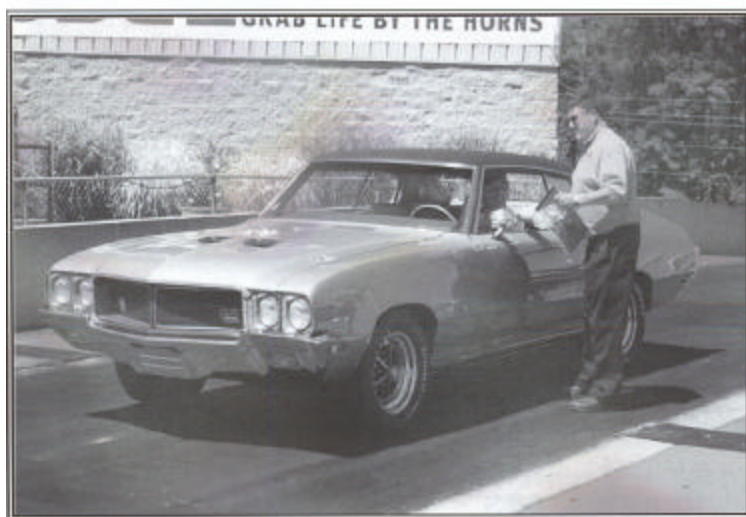
Bill Thorne

1960 Electra convertible



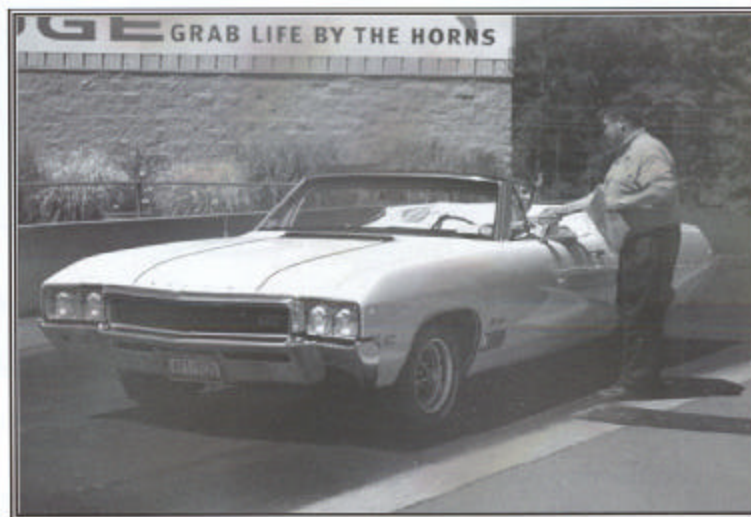
Bill Thorne

1975 LeSabre



Carl Rychlik

1970 Gran Sport Stage 1



Mike Trommetter

1968 Gran Sport 400 convertible



Phil & Pat Dayen

1969 Gran Sport



Rick Kybik

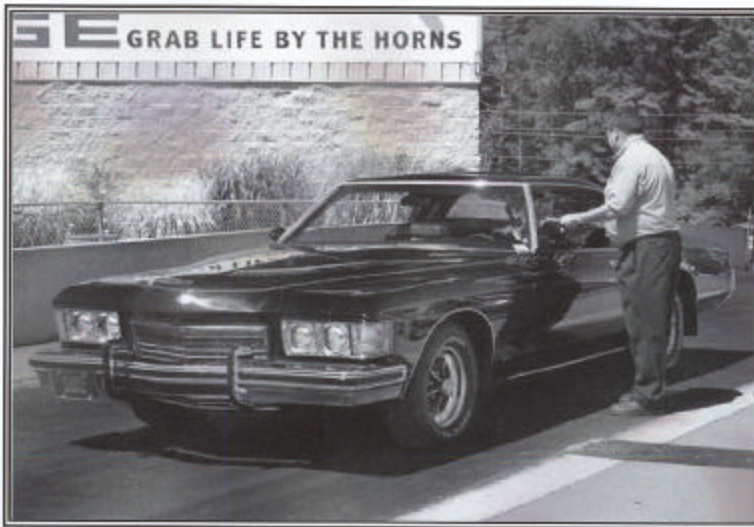
1986 Grand National

## Gold Winners Concours Class

Gary Morrison 1986 Grand National

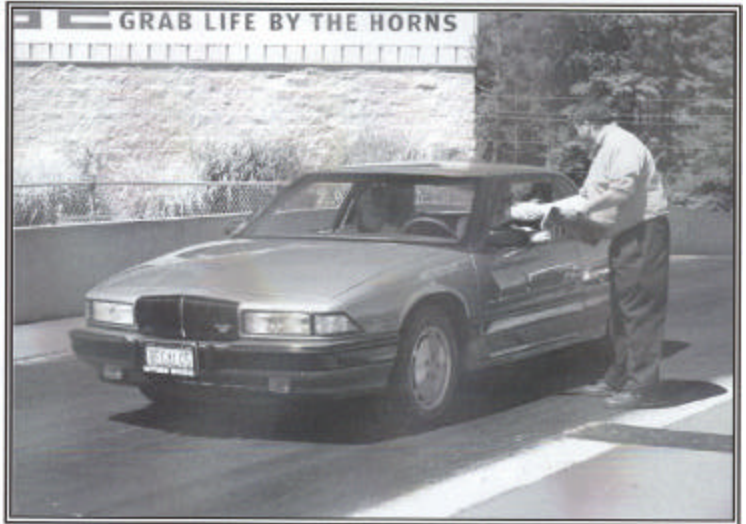


## Silver Winners Concours Class



Steve Pesch

1973 Riviera Gran Sport Kevin Meyers



1990 Regal Gran Sport

## Bronze Winners Concours Class



Bob Martis

1987 Regal T-Type

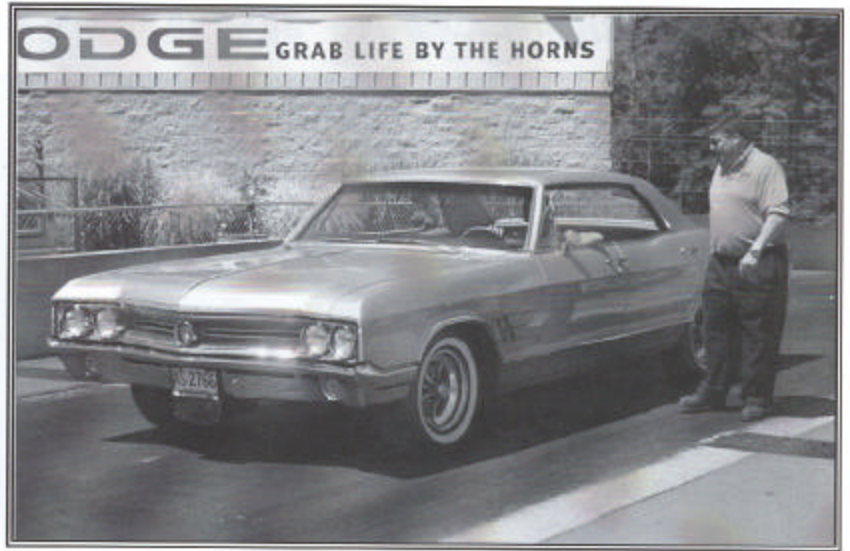


Emil Weber

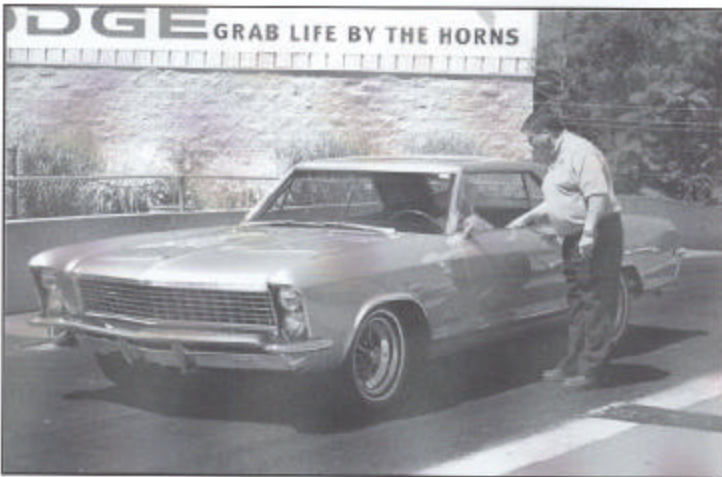
1984 LeSabre Limited

**Bronze Winners Concours Class**

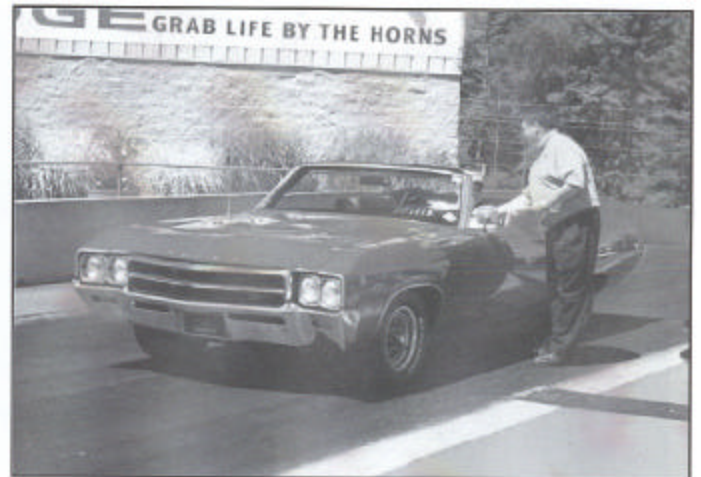
**Tom King     1965 Wildcat**



**Director's Choice Awards**



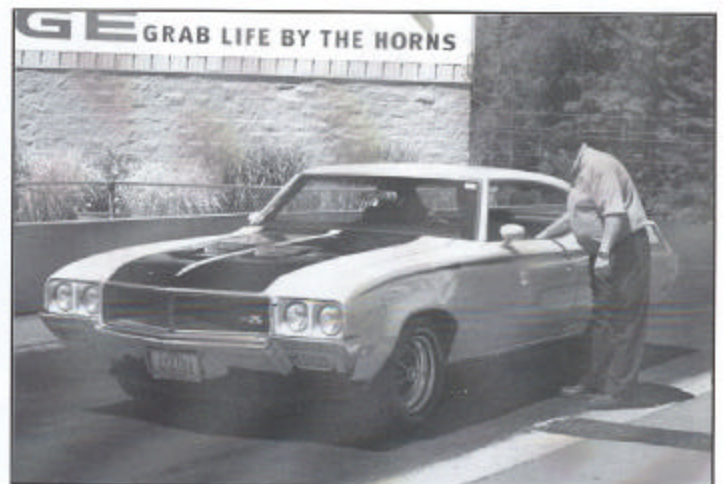
**Gary Hallock                      1965 Riviera Gran Sport**



**Todd Cornett                      1969 Gran Sport convertible**

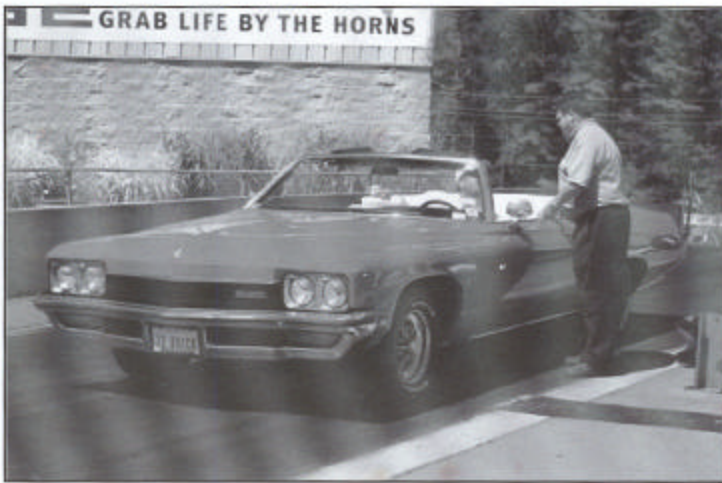


**John Csordas Jr.                      Skyhawk**



**Larry Gibson                      1970 GSX**

## Director's Choice Awards



Nick Rabi

1972 Centurion convertible



Marvin Shives

1967 Gran Sport convertible



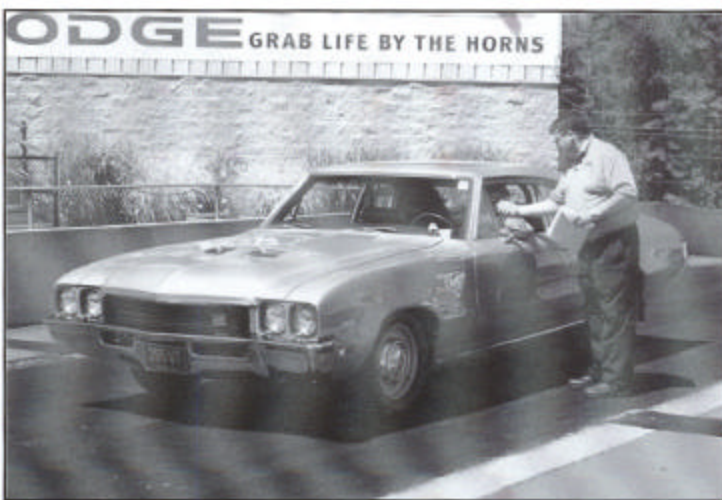
Norm Broski

1966 Gran Sport



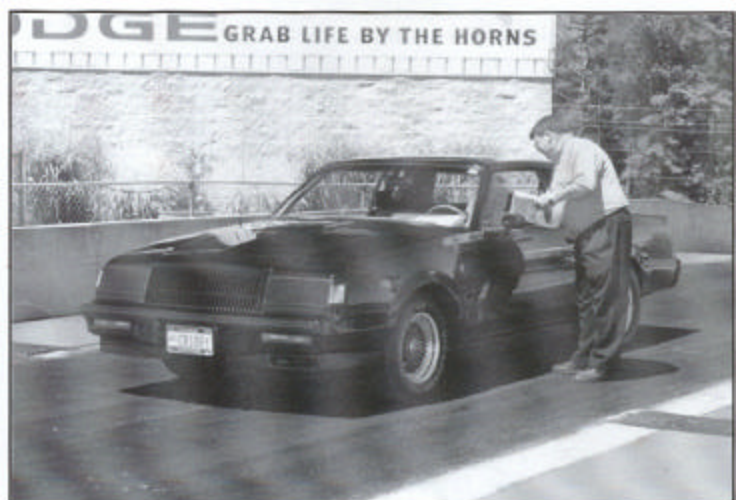
Paul Cassidy

1970 Skylark Sportwagon



Steve Schlater

1972 Skylark



Richard Hallock

1987 Grand National



# 3rd Annual BPG National Race Results

	Driver/Owner	Dial-In	ET	MPH
<b>Super 8</b>	Winner: Rich Brouwer	9.35	9.68	113.77
	Runner-Up: Rob Chilenski	9.55	14.33	65.02
<b>Quick 16</b>	Winner: Doug Paine	10.76	10.75	121.54
	Runner-Up: Bruno DiPaula	10.20	11.70 Foul	84.57
<b>Super Pro</b>	Winner: Bill Wills	11.64	11.61	110.04
	Runner-Up: Paul Cassidy	11.21	11.30 Foul	118.30
<b>Pro</b>	Winner: Haedin DeLarec	12.07	12.12	107.81
	Runner-Up: Al Delarec	12.28	12.37	106.09
<b>TSM</b>	Winner: Bill Anderson	Heads Up	9.90	137.46
	Runner-Up: Steve Sullivan		10.03	134.16
<b>TSO</b>	Winner: Dave Fiscus	Heads Up	9.13	156.30
	Runner-Up: Chris Lyons		10.79	114.76
<b>BCO</b>	Winner: Randy Kolasimski	12.88	12.91	98.02
	Runner-Up: Bill Wills	11.68	11.72	115.87
<b>DUCK (Buy Back)</b>	Winner: Rick Miller	10.02	10.04	129.38
	Runner-Up: Bruce Wilson	10.56	10.67	124.60
<b>Charity Race</b>	Winner: Renee Moore	12.15	12.10	110.47
	Runner-Up: Randy Kolasimski	12.83	12.88	102.29
<b>Fastest Qualifier</b>	John Schmidt	1971 Opel GT	7.93	at 172.30

# Race Winner Shots



Rich Brouwer

Super 8 Winner



Rob Chilenski

Super 8 Runner-Up



Doug Paine

Quick 16 Winner



Bruno DiPaula

Quick 16 Runner-Up



Bill Wills

Super Pro Winner



Paul Cassidy

Super Pro Runner-Up



Rick Miller

DUCK Class Winner



Bruce Wilson

DUCK Class Runner-Up



Randy Kolasimski

BCO Class Winner



Bill Wills

BCO Class Runner-Up



Renee Moore

Charity Race Winner



Randy Kolasimski

Charity Race Runner-Up

## Ted Baltuch's 1968 Gran Sport 400 Convertible

In our last issue we had a great response on Mike Trometter's 1968 Gran Sport convertible. It is a shame that Buick manufactured a ton of 1968 Skylarks and Gran Sports, yet you find fewer '68s out there than 1970 models. The '68 and '69 model years had a distingue style onto themselves, with clean sweeping lines.

The above super clean numbers matching 1968 convertible is owned by Ted Baltuch of Montreal Canada. Don't let the stock appearance fool you as Ted also sent us info on his '68 and his power plant build up.

I bought the above 1968 Gran Sport from a friend in Atlanta, Georgia who was ready to pass on the torch to someone who would appreciate the beauty of these cars. Prior to selling her he brought the car over to a professional restorer in Rome, Georgia where the car spent over 24 months with over \$25,000 invested into the restoration. During that time I was searching to buy a 1955 Roadmaster convertible, a 1959 Invicta convertible or a 1964 Wildcat, but this 1968 GS convertible became available to me. So needless to say I bought it.

My 1968 GS convertible was assembled in Baltimore with a 1969 hood for better breathing. I re-jetted the Q-jet and installed a Poston 113a cam, along with headers and magnaflow pipes. I decided to give the stock ignition a power punch so in went a MSD 6 ignition. Keeping things cool I installed a "Be Cool aluminum radiator with a dual fan 295 Flex A Lite. She runs now at 175 degrees all day long in the heat. The trans was rebuilt with a mild street strip converter along with a shift kit. The rear 12 bolt posi sports 3.42 gears. The suspension was also upgraded installing Edelbrock shocks, springs, torsion bars, anti-hop bars, control arms and other goodies were installed based on an article that was in Car Craft magazine, "She drives like a 1995 Impala SS" The car is riding on 15x8 rallyes (vintage) and 245/60 BFG tires. For stopping power I switched over to factory front disc brakes off a 1972 Sportwagon, which hauls down my Buick in a fast and controlled fashion.

For the interior I switched it over from a bench to buckets using interior parts and material from Legendary. Trying to keep the factory look I pulled out the Kenwood player and had bought and installed a factory Buick am/fm stereo and a Buick 8 track player. I ended up adding an Alpine CD changer in the trunk which plays off an FM frequency. Quite frankly I rarely play it, I just love listening to that Poston 113a lumping over and over, bumping through the headers when she idles at 600 rpm's. Soon after I added a factory console and shifter bought on eBay. For the exterior, the paint is Cortez Silver with an Inca Black stripe (well over \$6,000 worth of professional paint and body work). The bumpers were sourced and re-chromed by Desert Valley in Arizona.

She had been recently chassis dynoed at 277.5 rear wheel HP along with a very healthy net 355 ft lbs of stump pulling torque.

My goal was having a car that looked stock, was safe, and could keep up with turnpike speed traffic. Plus being able to pull hard off the line and having that cam/header sound (car sounds incredible: burble burble...like an inboard motor boat). She is very drivable and enjoys city cruises as much as hitting the open road. At 100 mph the car is still pulling extremely hard. Her only real weakness is a love for 94 octane and a silly habit of embarrassing Mustang 5.0 drivers along with those pesky imports.



# HOW TO "ID" 70-72 BUICK & 71-72 OLDSMOBILE A-BODY SPORT MIRRORS

*By Duane Heckman*

Sport Mirrors are one of the most popular options guys like to add when redoing their vehicles. They not only look nice, but with good examples of standard chrome mirrors getting more expensive and harder to find, they are gaining popularity.

You can find Sport Mirrors for sale all over the place, however the main problem is making sure you buy the correct ones. These mirrors were optional on almost every GM body style from the early 70's thru to at least the 90's, and the differences between many of them are not readily apparent.



One of the reasons for the mirror differences had to do with the outer door skins. When installed properly the tops of the mirrors are parallel to the ground. (See the above pictures.) To accomplish this GM needed to take into account the differences in door skin angles for the various models. They did this in one of two ways,

1. They left the mirror housings the same, and changed only the mounting gaskets or
2. They changed the bottom housing that mounts to the door skins.

Then, to further add to the number of variables, as new models were introduced GM often changed the mirror designs. Normally this would not create an identification problem, but many of these changes were so slight that unless you have the mirrors next to each other you cannot see the differences.

The result is that people have trouble telling the mirrors apart, and are constantly selling mirrors for the wrong applications. Often this "mistake" is not discovered until the mirrors are repainted and installed on the car. Then the owner notices the tops of the mirrors are "cocked" inwards towards the center of the car, and they look stupid. At this point I usually get a phone call from the "Buick guys", as I am the guy that sells the "Buick style" mirror gaskets, and often have to explain that they purchased the wrong mirrors and need to keep looking for the right ones. (This is definitely not the way to make friends.)

The above scenario is becoming so common that I decided it was time to write this article to help everyone avoid this problem. To do this I took information from mirrors that were known to be correct and started looking at the piles of "parts" mirrors that I had in my inventory. While doing this I found at least 3 different mirrors (different casting numbers) that could easily be mistaken for the correct early mirrors and discovered that GM had also changed the mirror glass assemblies slightly. I even tried to install these "later" mirror glass assemblies into the earlier housings and discovered they were larger and would not fit correctly. Therefore, for identification purposes, I will also include the glass date code information to help ID the correct assemblies.

## IDENTIFYING THE CORRECT MIRRORS

The first thing to note is the Sport Mirrors for both 70-72 Buick & 71-72 Oldsmobile A-bodies are identical in every way, with the exception of the mounting gaskets. The Buicks use a wedge shaped gasket (pictured above) while the Olds use a flat one with a thin raised lip at the outer edge. This allows the Olds mirrors to mount "flush" to the door skins, while the Buick mirrors require a beveled gasket to "shim" the mirrors so they sit correctly.

Another thing to note are the numbers that are cast into the housings. These casting numbers identify each piece of the assembly. On the upper housings the numbers are located behind the mirror, so if you tilt the mirror to one side both the number and date code can be seen easily. The numbers on the bases are located on the top of the part, where they attach to the upper housing. To check these numbers you need to take the mirrors apart to view them. Also, the numbers on the right hand bases are extremely hard to read (Cast very lightly); therefore it might be necessary to look at both the left and right bases before determining if they are correct.

The upper housings also have a variety of "Date Code Clock" cast into them. These codes have the last digit of the production year placed within a circle, with 12 spokes radiating out from it. Each spoke designates a month, with the longest spoke being January. Often a series of raised dots are used to indicate the month of manufacture, although in this case a single dot is used. Regardless of the number of dots, the last month with a raised dot will be the month of manufacture. In our case (See below pictures) the dot is placed at the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> spoke, therefore the casting dates for both these housings are April of 1972.

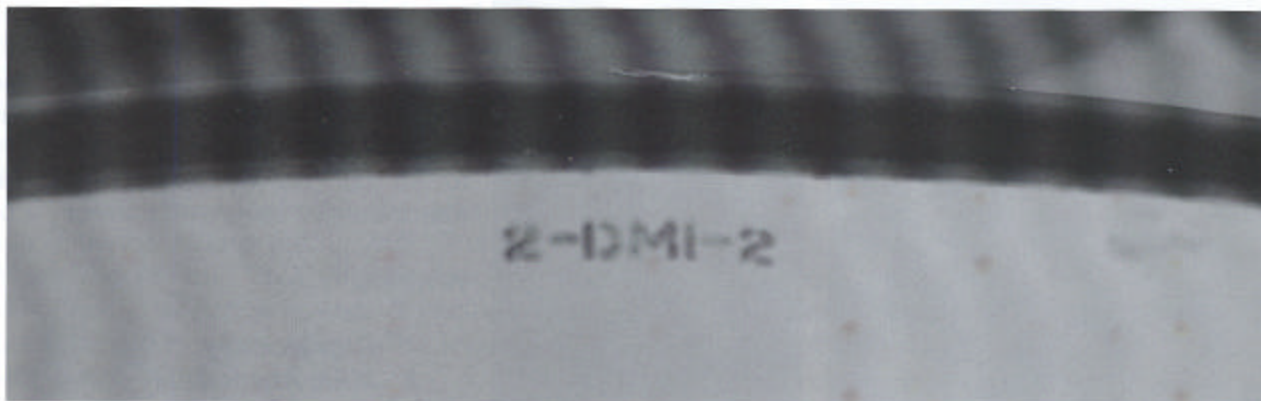


*Here are pictures of the left & right upper mirror housing casting numbers and date code clocks.*



*Here are pictures of the left mirror base, including a close-up of the casting number.*

The mirror glass is also date coded on Sport Mirrors. The code is etched at the top of the glass and lists the number of the month first, then the manufacturers logo, and finally the last digit of the production year. The below example of "2-DMI-2" would decode as February of 1972.



*This picture shows the glass date code from one of the above Sport Mirrors.*

## Summary

Listed below is the information needed to identify the correct mirrors for both 70-72 Buick & 71-72 Oldsmobile A-bodies.

## Upper Housing

Casting Number 29853 (Left), 29843 (Right) (Numbers are located behind the mirror.)

Date Codes Anywhere from the middle of the 70-model year until the end of the 72-model year. (The date code clock is located next to the casting number.)

## Lower Housing

Casting Number 29855 (Left), 29845 (Right) (Numbers are located on the top of the part, where they attach to the upper housing.)

Date Codes (None)

## Mirror Glass Assemblies

Casting Number 29854 (Left), 29844 (Right) (Numbers are located on the black plastic backing assembly, **on the backside of the mirror.**)

Date Codes Anywhere from the middle of the 70-model year until the end of the 72-model year. (Date codes are etched into the glass at the top of the mirror.)

## Winners of Last Issue Contest – Congratulations!



We would like to thank everyone's quick response and their guesses on who these two stud muffins are.

Well the answer is Mike Garrison (far left) and Doug Hecker. We had 6 members respond some on the very same day. So to be fair we decided to give all six members that answered correctly a prize.

### Winners

1. *Ron Mooney*
2. *Mike Atwood*
3. *Glen Biggers*
4. *Denise Hosack*
5. *John Kemper*
6. *Eric Schmeizer*

**CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL WINNERS**

## Try This One...

This shot was taken way back in the 80's when puffy hair styles were in. So guys and girls put on those thinking caps. She was real fast back in the day...I meant the Buick! ☺

Alright you only get one hint here. So start digging out that Buick calendar and remember the Alamo!

The first 3 winners will receive a copy of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual BPG Event.



All participants must be BPG members and can reach me at [marti44@comcast.net](mailto:marti44@comcast.net) or call 845-406-0633. If no answer, please leave your guess and please don't forget to leave your name and address with a call back number, Good Luck!!



## ***Buick's Centurion; 1971 - 1973***

A new line for Buick, replacing the Wildcat series, the Centurion was built with the idea of a full size sedan on steroids. The Centurion was a masculine, performance image machine that was built with a clean look. The side trim was kept to a minimum with only bright chrome rocker panel moldings and wheel well moldings. The classic Buick vent ports were gone, along with a grille with special texture and the taillights that had bright grids over them. Centurion name appeared on the front fenders and the round Centurion medallion was on the sail panels and on the deck and hood. The Centurion was to carry on the fight of a full size performance car taking over where the Wildcat left off. The Centurion was packed full of creature comforts, known to all Buick buyers, on the down side the Centurion was tipping the scales at 4,300 pounds.

Performance wise the power plant for the new Centurion was a simple choice, it can only be had with the stump pulling 455. The 455 was standard for the 1971 and 1972 years before Buick downsized for the 1973 year to the 350 as the standard engine, leaving the optional 455 for those performance addictive buyers. It should also be known that Buick did offer a high output engine option, which indeed is a rare option. The engine option came equipped with the oversized stage 1 valves along with dual exhaust.

The Centurion was definitely an "all new" and fresh look for Buick. It carried both a macho and performance look at a time when both characteristics were on the downside with the industry leaning more toward economy and handling. The public response was not over whelming, but Buick did manage to sell close to 12,000 2-door coupes and just over 15,000 4-door sedans. In addition to those numbers Buick produced only 2,162 Centurion convertibles, making the ragtops the most desirable.

For the 1972 year the Centurion still shared the same 124-inch wheelbase platform with her sister the LeSabre. Buick did make some distingue changes for the '72 model year, the Centurion now sported a new vertical grille along with minor changes to the front and bumpers and lights. As for the power plant, Buick stayed with the 455 being the only offered engine. Buick faired better for the 1972 year in sales, with a total of 36,165 units! Of that amount again only 2,396 units were convertibles.

The 1973 year was to be the swansong for the Centurion. With rising fuel and insurance prices topped with public demand for small economical cars the Centurion along with other performance vehicles found themselves on the corporate chopping block. Buick attempted to save off slumping sales and now offered the 350 engine as the standard engine for the Centurion. The 350 engine had a rating of 175 net horsepower which proved to be a bit weak when moving over 4300 pounds of steel. The 455 power plant was now an optional engine. For the 1973 model year, the 455 fender emblems mounted directly under the Centurion name plate distinguished Centurions equipped with the 455 engine option. Visually the 1973 Centurion had a slight face lift sporting the federally mandated crash absorbing front bumper along with a new grille design and a new rear bumper and lights. The Centurion name still carried on the higher end of performance with luxury over the LaSabre. Amazingly though, sales for the 1973 Centurion would end up being the highest of all three years. Total sales topped out at 44,976 units. Also up for the 1973 year was the Centurion convertibles. Buick produced 5,739 of them. One important note to this, I did some time ago write to Sloan regarding the break down on how many Centurion convertibles for the 1973 year came equipped with the optional 455 engine. Unfortunately their reply was, that they had no record of the breakdown. Their educated guess, and I quote, "based on the two previous production model year numbers (1971 and 1972 Centurion convertibles) it would be safe to say that at least half of the 5,739 number would have had the optional 455 engine, with the other half being equipped with the standard 350 engine.

The Centurion could be basically considered an upbeat model of the LeSabre, was now gone for the 1974 model year. The LeSabre soldiered on with the mighty 455 engine still being part of the series until the mid 70's. Only now, some 30 years later the Centurion is becoming a desired classic car, with the convertibles being the most wanted. This past BPG Nationals we did have the pleasure on having all three years represented. Attending was Adam Martin with his 1971 Convertible, Nick Rabi with his 1972 Convertible and Rick Martinez with his 1973 Convertible 455 option. All three cars are show car quality yet are drivers, both Adam and Nick have even dabbled in the quarter mile racing with their ragtops. These three Centurions are fine examples of Buick's full size muscle, you won't find any trailer queens here, though Rick does use his Centurion for trailering his racecar.



All three years. Above from left to right is Rick Martinez's 1973 Centurion 455, Adam Martin's 1971 Centurion and Nick Rabi's 1972 Centurion.



It is indeed a rare site to get all three years together at at one meet. During this past BPG Nationals all 3 years that Buick made the Centurion were present on the show field and on the track. Top left is Adam Martin's white 1971 convertible, top right is Nick Rabi's red 1972 convertible and on the left is Rick Martinez's red 1973 convertible.



# 3rd Annual BPG Nationals

