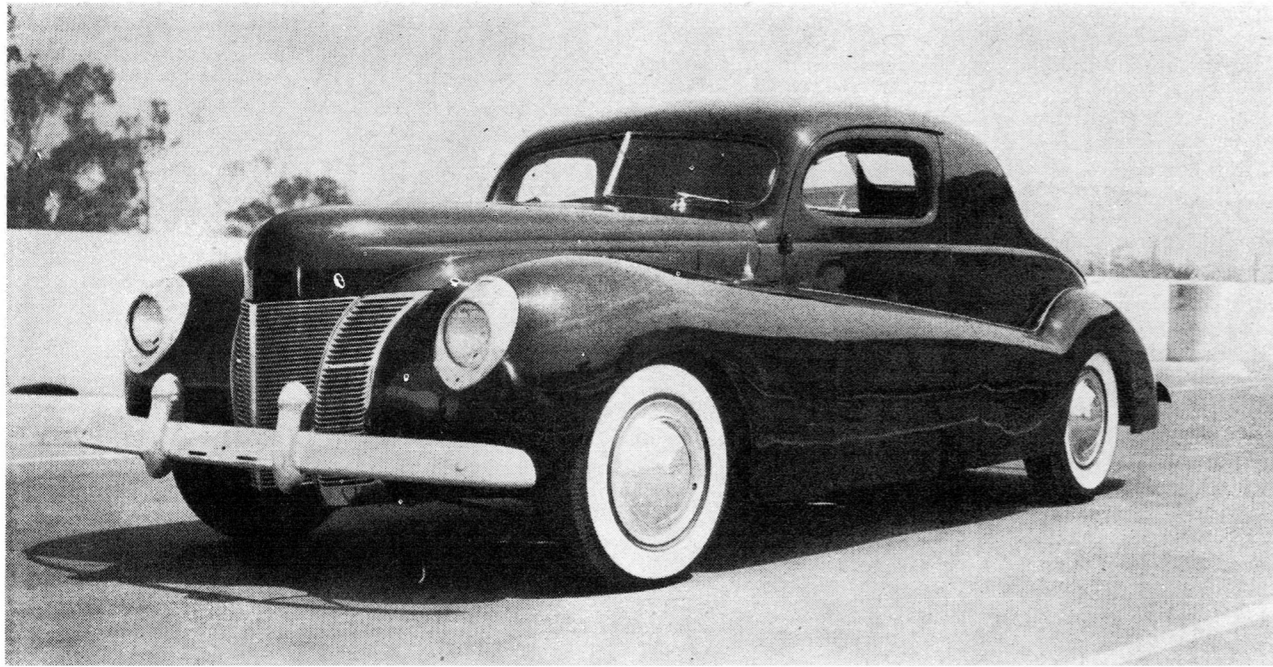


COMPARABLE TO THE BEST OF THE LATE MODEL CUSTOMS IS THIS . . .



# '40 FORD COUPE

Text and Photos by Alan Deveau

IT IS ALWAYS interesting to report on a pre-war custom car, especially when it is as outstanding as this 1940 Ford coupe of Bob Creasman's. We see more and more late model autos getting the custom treatment, but it is getting to be something of a rarity to see a good one of the pre 1942 era that is not in the roadster or pick-up class.

This car is of particular interest for these days, in that Creasman, who lives in Los Angeles, bought the car in 1943 and has owned it ever since. When he began to restyle it, late in '43, the car was the first '40 coupe to be channelled and the second to be chopped in the Los Angeles area. This took in most, if not all, of the country in those early days of car customizing. The body work was all done by Creasman in conjunction with the Brand Brothers Body Shop in Los Angeles where Bob is currently employed.

Bob's car is proof that a good custom, a practical custom, is a car that you can live with for a long time without tiring of. Therefore, a fairly substantial investment is not necessarily wasted if you keep the car in good repair. And who wouldn't keep it up if they had one like this. Bob figures it would take approximately \$1500 in metal work and upholstery to duplicate the car at today's prices, and considering his original investment in 1943, plus the money he has spent customizing the car in the meantime, his depreciation has been relatively light when you consider the years spanned and miles of dependable transportation involved.

The two biggest operations were the chopping of the top and channeling of the body. Four inches were removed from the top and a like amount of channeling dropped the car another four inches around the frame. The actual processes

involve considerably more labor than might at first be imagined. For example, it was necessary to extend the length of the top four inches with a section of body steel in order that the sloping windshield posts and rear window areas could meet the top after the chopping operation. Then the rear quarter windows were blanked in with sheet stock and the seams filled and smoothed for an interesting side area treatment.

In the channeling, four inches had to be cut from the height of the hood since the front fenders were to remain stationary and unchanged while the body was dropped between them. The rear fenders were left attached and dropped with the body—a doubtful practice because of the tire clearances involved, but it has been satisfactory in this instance.

A word of advice to anyone contemplating such a change—channel first and then chop. Creasman reversed the procedure and discovered that in removing the body for the channeling, some of the body seams had a tendency to crack where the cutting had been done, causing needless repair work.

While we are making major body alterations, let's jump five years to 1948 when the fadeaway fenders were added. These were built up from sheet body stock which was formed around inch wide steel strips, outlining the desired contour in the manner of a birdcage. The fadeaways were faired into the existing stock front and rear fenders without otherwise disturbing them. The marked resemblance to the current Jaguar XK-120 fenders is so pronounced that Bob has had a number of inquiries about how he made a set of Jag fenders fit the coupe. The strange fact is that these were built two years before the XK hit the market.

Since the car had been chopped and channelled, it was essen-

tial that more head and leg room be provided on the inside. This was accomplished by removing the seat from its adjusting track and bolting it directly to the floor, thus giving ample leg room, even for the six feet plus of Creasman.

The rest of the exterior custom work includes a crease atop the hood which replaces the chrome strip there previously; tail lights removed and holes filled; toe operated opening levers beneath the doors to replace the handles; and an inside opener installed for the deck lid. An inside trunk gas filler and '46 Ford bumpers complete the body modifications.

The suspension has been left strictly alone. Not even so much as a set of lowering blocks have been added to detract from the riding qualities. As a matter of fact, this is one of the best riding customs we have seen in some time. The only mechanical alteration, other than engine, was to swing the Pitman arm a bit forward because of the body channeling.

The present upholstery has been added in recent months and is black from top to bottom to match the jet black finish. Black Cohyde seats, pleated and rolled, black headliner and black rugs, all done by Bob Poe, set off chrome window moldings and a chrome trimmed dash in an appealing, eye-catching manner.

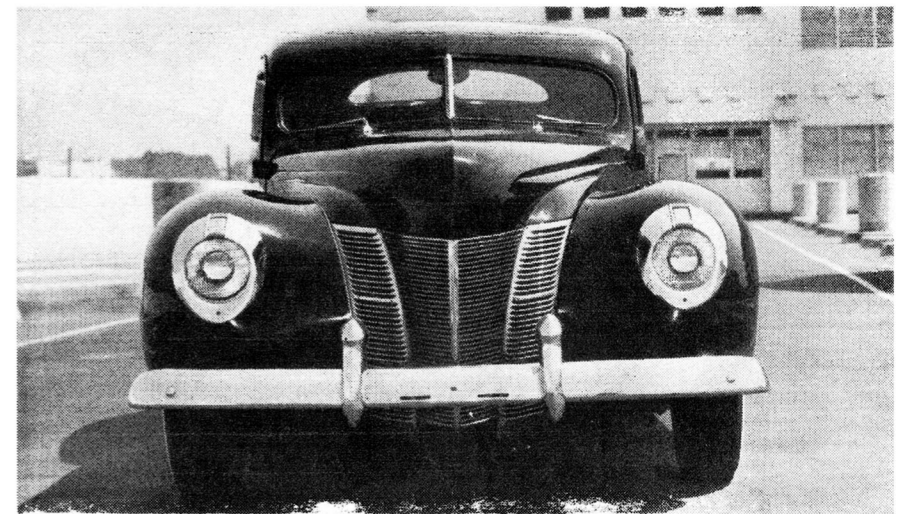
The engine is '42 Mercury and has been bored to 3 $\frac{3}{8}$ " and stroked  $\frac{1}{4}$ ". In addition, it has been given the full treatment with a Winfield Super R-1 cam, Edelbrock heads and manifold, block ported, polished, and relieved, and all parts balanced. This would indicate that the engine should go, and it actually did turn 105 in 1949 at a lakes event, running a stock rear end gear ratio with 6.50-15 tires on the rear and 5.00-15's in front.

All of which goes to show that a good custom is a good custom, regardless of age. The only requirements are craftsmanship, care, and the pride of ownership of an automobile that sets a true restyling connoisseur apart from his Detroit production auto friends.

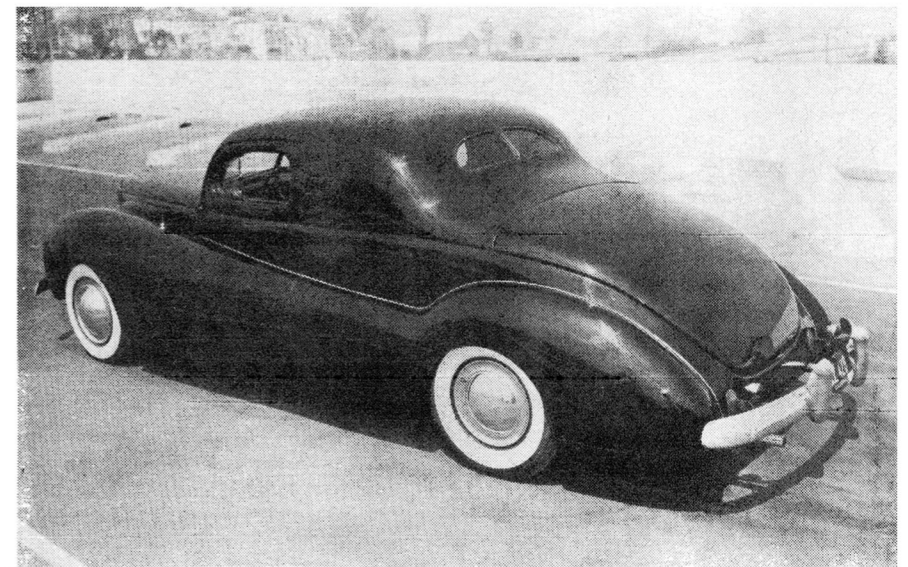
**BLACK** Cohyde was used on seats and side panels. Interior by Bob Poe features chrome window trim, black upholstery



HOP UP, October, 1953

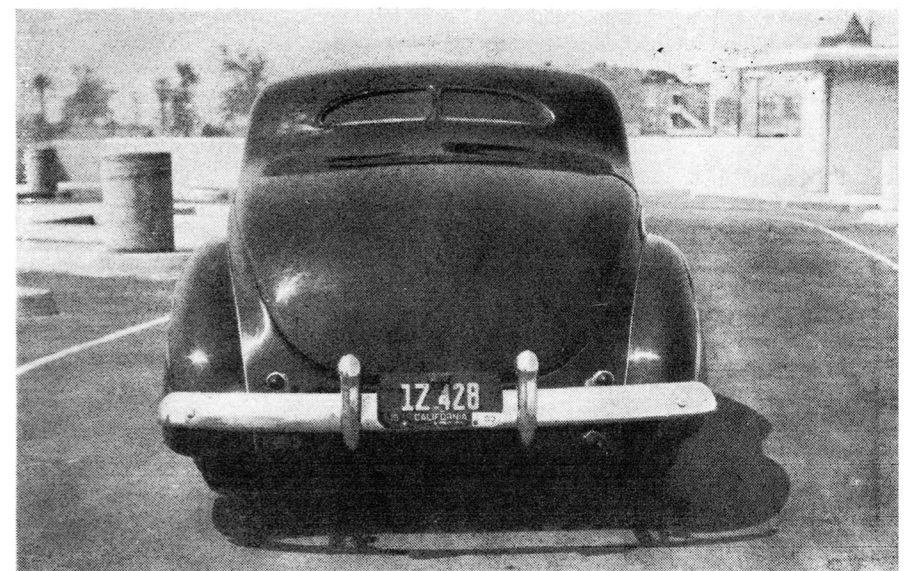


*PROFILE is low and neat with chopped top, channelled body and normal fender line*



*SLEEK, Jaguar type fade-away fenders have been blended smoothly into coupe body*

*GLISTENING black lacquer paint is greatly accentuated by lack of chrome at rear*



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