

CLOCKWISE FROM RIGHT—To satisfy the desires of the division tech director, Ken re-routed the brake lines way up front by the radiator. The stock location makes them extremely vulnerable in the event of clutch explosion. Front suspension utilizes 90/10 shocks and the same springs that are found on the SS/E AMX cars. The deepened oil pan holds three extra quarts. That extra plate on the first half is for protection. The car comes down hard after first gear tire burners and the pan sometimes is given more abuse than it deserves. Twenty-eight-year-old Rose has been racing for the last eight. He has recently purchased an AMX SS/E car and will campaign it during the coming season. The left rear leaves received much attention and have been modified to the point where no traction bars are needed.

AMERICAN IMAGERY

An "ugly duckling" among the rest of the F/S Camaros, Oldses and Mopars, this little tudor knew it could—and did.

story and photos by Ro McGonegal

CHANCES ARE, IF you're going racing in the F/S class you'll most likely choose a late model Olds, Camaro or Mopar to get the job done. That is exactly what Ken Rose decided not to do. He became interested in the Hurst SC/Rambler shortly after its introduction. He looked at the shipping weight and the hp rating of the then-unknown quantity 390 and set about to make the whole thing work.

The most difficult problem was finding information on the car's various systems—ones that work. Ken likens the situation to that of being the first guy to ever build a small block Chevy. Nobody knew nothin' about nothin'. He just relied on his ingenuity and former race car building experience and plain ol' trial and error to get the car "homologated". Once the engine building process was sorted out (the least of the problems) the car suffered severely in the suspension department—at both ends. Here, then, is where we begin our story.

Before we get to the proven facts, we'll let Ken expound on some of his "production" problems. "The most difficult problem was finding the correct ring combination for the slugs. It seems that the 390 has very hard cylinders, thus preventing the rings to seat quickly. We also had a problem of what the right

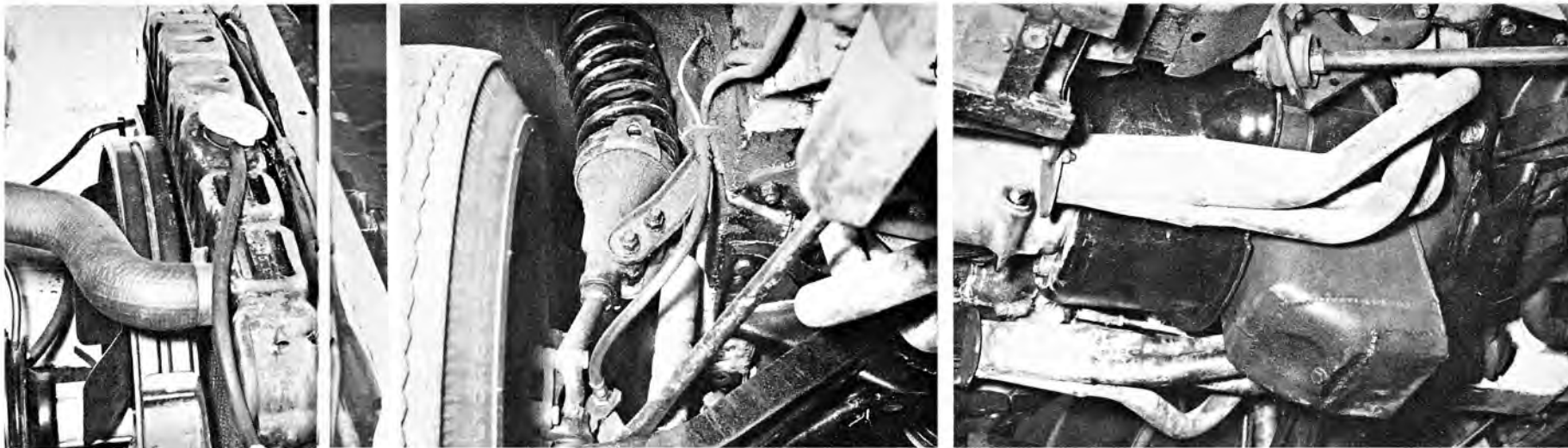
clearances should be for the maximum in performance and reliability. Besides, who has ever built a Rambler engine? Where do you start? You don't just pick up a magazine and start reading about the hot scoop on Ramblers!"

The SC/Rambler runs at both NHRA and AHRA tracks, a trend that is being adopted by more and more heretofore "one organization" racers, in the E/O and F/S brackets. Best times for the car are 12.49-112.80. How's this come about? The thermal/mechanical generation comes from the 390 motor that now displaces 401 inches due to a new 3.187" bore. The crankshaft and pistons are Forgedtrue units of the ThermoRev variety. The rods connected to the dykes-type slugs are Crankshaft Company items. Nothing but the best. Running clearances are as follows: rods-.0025, mains-.003, walls-.009 and a deck height of .015.

The valve train is stock and uses a blueprinted Crower stick for that "plus" area needed in today's stockers. Rose tried the factory cam and others but claims that the Crower unit works better than the rest. Like he said, trial and error—the only way home for this engine.

The Carter carb rests on the stock intake manifold but has been treated to

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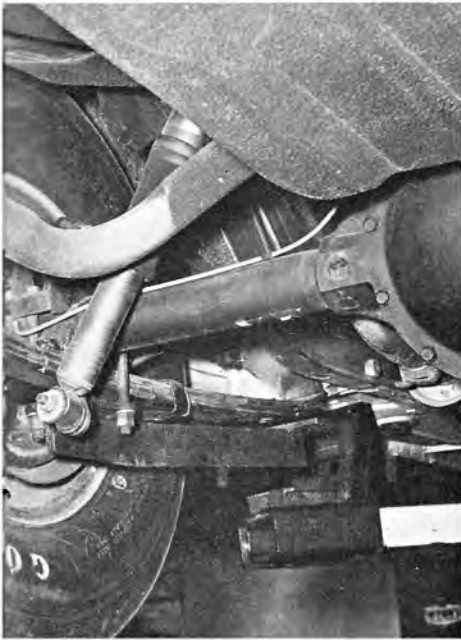
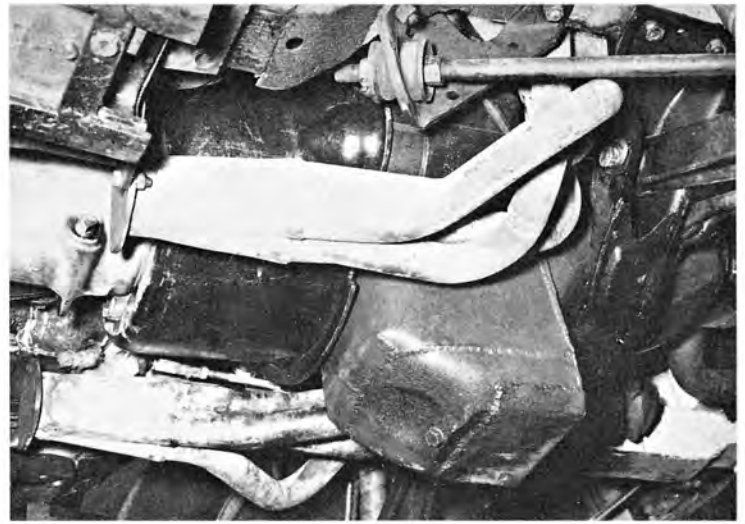
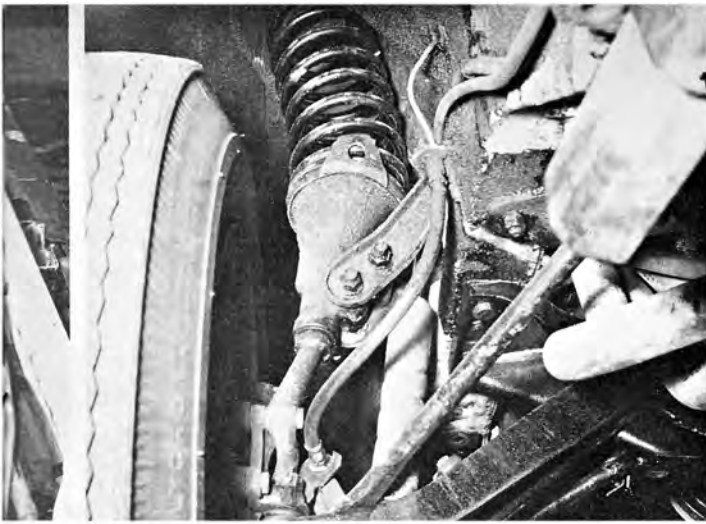
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104 secondaries. The primaries remain stock and the whole mess is fed by dual Stewart Warner pumps running through the factory number. Ignition is handled by Delco parts cranking through the 12 distributor degrees on up to the total 36. Exhaust is relieved through tubes by Doug Thorley.

A Lakewood Industries blast shield covers the Schiefer 10.5" Long-type clutch, pressure plate and 'wheels. The transmission is a B-W fitted with a 2.36:1 first gear. Shifting is aided by the factory-supplied Hurst mechanism with slight modifications for the utmost in gear changing ease.

The standard building process stops here, somewhat, with the front and rear suspensions. Experimentation proved that six cylinder #250 springs used in conjunction with 90/10 Cure Rides provided the best for weight transfer. The coils are the same ones that are currently being used in the AMX SS/E cars. The back end sees its way through the traps by reversed spring leaves on the left side only—the bottom four leaves, that is, Rose also has a pair of homemade traction bars that attach to the spring pads and the standard factory torque links for rebound control. Since he has reversed the leaf springs, he says the traction bars are really no longer needed because there is no more wheel hop. Delco Air Lift shocks have been added, too, and are run at 10 psi.

The rear has been fitted with 4.44's and tall 9.50x15 D5 Goodyears. Front rubber is Atlas 8.15x15. All tires are supported by Cragar wheels. The slicks have been pinned to the rims to keep the valve stems from pulling on burn-outs.

Ken did all the work himself with the exception of the machining that was handled by Fairfield, N.J.'s Bob O'Brien, at his Competition Engines shop. Helping Ken keeping the car in the money is Rick Leonard. Car owners Lakeview Rambler and Paul Franzetti are also present whenever and wherever the Jr. Stocker competes.

See, it really wasn't too hard after all. You just gotta use a little American ingenuity, an American Motors car and produce the "American Image." ■



SUPER STOCK MAGAZINE