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When referring to rare performance Camaros, most of us instantly think back to the first-gen "go-to's." Most notably, ones with names that end in "O." Names like COPO and Yenko quickly come to mind. Of course, there were others that had a horse in the supercar derby. Nickey, Dana, Baldwin-Motion, and Fred Gibb, to name a few. And if you were to bring up Berger, you'd be talking about another serious "player" of the latesixties Supercar wars.



PERFORMANCE PROTOTYPE

SS

The First Berger/GMMG SS

In the fall of 2000, this Camaro was built as a Phase I car, then a year later was beefed up as a Phase II hot rod.

A genuine Berger calling card, it was used as a promotional piece at a number of car shows including a stint on the '01 Hot Rod Power Tour.

In 2004, Dennis sold the car to John Fullerton, who was sales manager of Jacky Jones Chevrolet in Murphy, North Carolina. Not long after, Chris got wind that it was for sale and traded in his '01 LE car for John's 89,000-mile Berger prototype.

Although the car was in really good shape when he bought it, Chris knew it was special, so a minor restoration was on tap. He replaced the center console, some minor trim pieces,

and installed a 1LE sway bar out back to match the one up front.

To keep the car in show-quality condition, Chris has been gradually picking away at replacing worn parts as needed. At this point most all the "little stuff" has been updated or upgraded to Chris' highbrow taste.

Being the first Berger fourth-gen, and the only '99 ever built, has gotten the car some added attention and invitations to some pretty high-end car shows.

"One of the coolest things I've been able to do with the car is show it at the '07 Forge Show held at the Chattanooga Convention Center," mentioned Chris. "This is an invitation-only show where the rarest,

most collectible muscle cars on the planet are displayed. I was so excited that I spent five weeks detailing the car to have it ready for that show. I was absolutely honored to display my car next to some super rare muscle cars."

The car was also in the Camaro display last winter at the Corvette Museum in Bowling Green, Kentucky, for a few months holding court with other high-profile Camaros including Bumblebee, the Papa Johns second-gen, a few early 1LE cars, and a ZL1. Pretty stout company, for sure.

So with the Berger name firmly associated to this Camaro, performance plays a major part of the act, so Chris jumps at most every opportunity to get the car some track time. In 2010, he brought the car on two legs of the Hot Rod Power Tour, the LXS Fest in Bowling Green, Kentucky, and entered it in the Run to the Hills in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee.

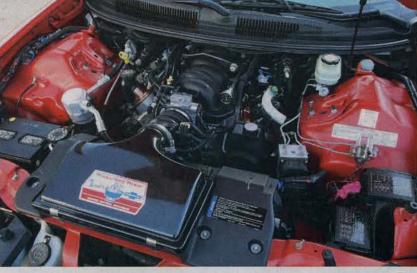
With a tick over 400 hp to the rear wheels to play with, BMR tubular A-arms reside up front while Eibach springs front and rear lower the car 1 1/2 inches. The collaboration offers improved cornering performance and a more aggressive stance. Fikse five-spoke Profil 17x9.5-inch wheels take residence on all four corners, while Riken Raptor rubber (275/40-R17) ride up front and Nitto 555 (275/40-17) provide extra grip out back.

Except for the white leather houndstooth seat covers, and white-face dash signed by Helen Gibb, Matt Murphy, Valerie Harrell, Dennis Barker, Matt Berger, Dale Berger, Scott Settlemire, and John Moss, the interior plays host to mostly stock trim. Besides some additional Berger badges and striping, the exterior relied on GM's competent paint department.

Chris' '99 is one rare fourth-gen, and to any fan of late-model muscle, this is definitely a super collectible piece. Even so, that valuable Berger Chevrolet pedigree doesn't hinder Chris' appetite for hammering it on the drag strip, road course, or autocross. And that's exactly what this car was built to do. Besides, it's exactly the way Chris likes it. •











>> Hugger Orange exterior
 >> Dual hood and deck lid stripes
 >> Black billet grille with SS emblem

Black taillight panel

■Berger "Prescribed Power" fender emblems

Chrome "By Berger" rear emblem
Phase II LS1 motor

435 hp/ 410 tq LS1 package 1 3/4-inch headers

Mafter-cat GMMG chambered exhaust

≥LS7 flywheel ≥LS7 clutch

B&M short-throw shifter
High-flow air box lid w/

"Powered by Berger" decal

3.73 gears1.5-inch Eibach lowering springs

Dimpled rotors

Black powdercoated calipers

Hurst line lock

FM 5 Fikse Wheels (17x9.5)

White Hurst shifter ball

Horsepower and torque dash plaque
Black and white houndstooth

seat covers
White face gauges with

"By Berger" logo







