

A Showroom Goat

by Peter Longini

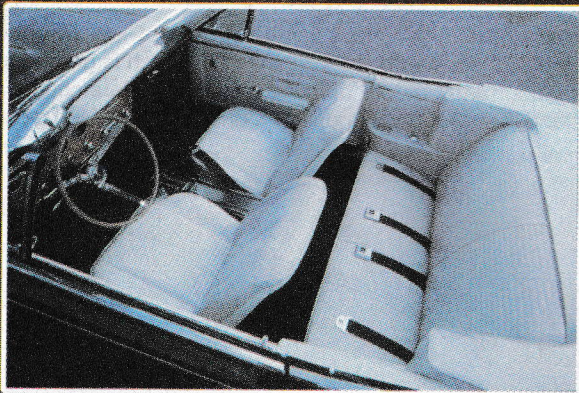


This '66 GTO has been completely returned to its original specs

Nine years ago, when David Frankovich bought this 1966 Pontiac GTO convertible, it was what he called a "20:20" car – it looked great at either 20 feet or 20 mph. But up close and under normal operating conditions, the muscle car's limitations became painfully evident.

Several years before Frankovich bought the GTO, its seller – who was by then the vehicle's third owner – had cobbled the car together for use as a daily driver using parts scavenged from a 1967 GTO, which he also owned. Its motor had come from a 1974 Pontiac. Other material and mechanical parts had been taken from a variety of other non-authentic sources. Fortunately, the seller still owned the car's original motor – a 389 C.I. V-8 – which he also sold to Frankovich in 1989.

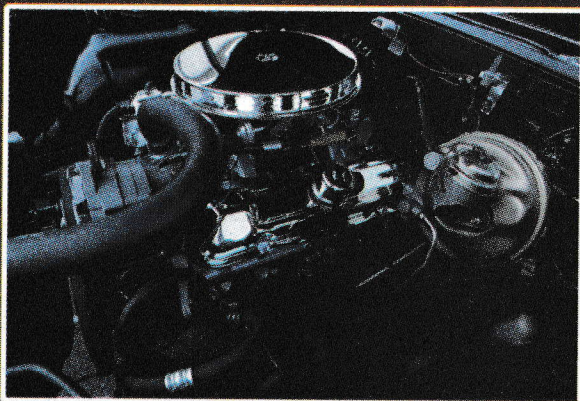
Three years ago, Mr. Frankovich brought his car to Palermo Auto Body. There, it was rebuilt under the supervision of the shop's restoration specialist, William Hahn, who put the car through a complete body-off-frame restoration from the ground up. After stripping, repairing and protecting its sheet and cast metal parts, the car's original burgundy metallic finish and parchment interior fabric colors were restored to their original luster. The full spectrum of authentic trim and power accessories available for that model from the OE factory in Pontiac, Michigan, were also acquired and installed. A group of skilled contractors, assigned to work on the car's mechanical and upholstery parts, were supervised by Hahn in restoring the car to its like-new appearance and performance capabilities.



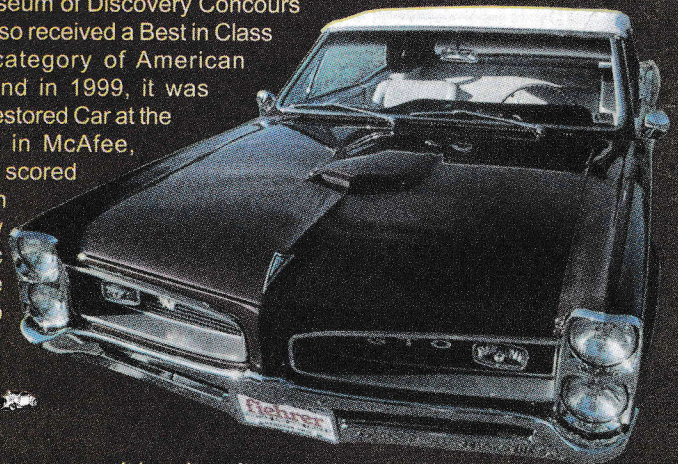
Looking like the day it left the showroom

In returning the car to its original factory specifications, close attention was paid to even the smallest of details. For example, all production markers, casting numbers and date codes have been painstakingly researched and verified. All of the hardware used is authentic, right down to the head markings on the bolts and the use of hard-to-find factory locking nuts. Small parts and identification labels, when not available from original equipment sources, have been fabricated to original specifications.

During 1998, the car was honored at several major exhibitions. At the prestigious Amelia Island show in Florida, it was presented with an Amelia Award for American Muscle Car. At the Pontiac Oakland club International national convention in Sturbridge, Massachusetts, the car scored 398 out of a possible 400 and received its first Junior Gold Award. In Dayton, it was awarded Best of Class at the Museum of Discovery Concours d'Elegance. It also received a Best in Class award in the category of American Muscle Car. And in 1999, it was awarded Best Restored Car at the GTO Nationals in McAfee, New Jersey and scored a perfect 400 in the Buffalo, New York, Pontiac Nationals – the only car to do that in that year.



This 389 cid. Engine pushes 335 hp



It just doesn't get much cooler than this