

CAR BUILDER

MARCH / APRIL 2016

**AWESOME
ROD
SHOWS**

**COBRA DRIFTING -
TOO MUCH FUN!**
Slip 'n Slide in a Superformance





**HELLCAT
SLAYER:
780HP HURST
SUPERCAT
CHALLENGER**

**ROCKET LAUNCH
WITH A
TURBO
ECOBOOST**



**500 HORSES
IN A TRICK
PONY CAR**

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DYNAMIC

*Hurst Supplied Dual-Purpose Performance V
SuperCat GSS Challenger and Heritage GSS*

Text by Larry Weiner
Photos by Steve Temple



Some folks say that you can't have your cake and eat it too.

Which is actually a pretty weird expression, as the late, great comedian George Carlin once observed. ("What should I eat, someone else's cake instead?" he retorted.)

Hurst thinks you can have both with its Dodge Challenger and Ram conversion packages. For the muscle-car enthusiasts who wants a matching truck,

DUO

*With the
Ram*



look no further. Easy-peasy, you can have a hot ride and a performance pickup that really hauls, in every sense of the expression.

There's more to this dynamic duo, as we'll see. First we'll

start with the SuperCat GSS Challenger, and serious yet much less expensive alternative to the Hellcat. And then we'll dig into the Hurst Ram, and show how it's an ideal complement to the Challenger.



The SuperCat Challenger is a Ferocious Feline

If the SuperCat sounds like it could be a super hero, that's because it really is. While many of us would like a Hellcat with its 707 raging horses under the hood, the fact is that only 2,500 units were produced in 2015, and with orders exceeding 9,000, the inevitable law of supply and demand reared its

ugly head and prices went through the roof. Although production is slated to double for 2016, that's still less than the number of buyers who didn't get their Hellcats in 2015, let alone those who will join the ranks of the hopeful next year.

In physics, there is an age old axiom that states

"nature abhors a vacuum." In the case of the Hellcat, with so few available, the prices have escalated to the point that they have shut out the average enthusiast.

Leave it to the ever innovative Mr. Norm to come up with an affordable, readily available alternative. After all, this ain't his first trip to the muscle-car BBQ.



B-Body Charger R/T into the lightweight A-Body and create the brutally fast GSS Dart.

Seeing the popularity of the Hellcat, coupled with prices reaching the stratosphere, he quickly realized that many enthusiasts would like an affordable high-performance alternative that looked just like it—but at a fraction of the cost. His solution? The Hurst SuperCat GSS. After debuting at the Mopar Nationals in Columbus, it was surrounded by crowds of enthusiasts



just like a Hellcat, but one that they could actually afford. (Pricing for a 2016 Hellcat ranges between \$67K and \$74K, with options, and that's not including any additional dealer markups. A base Challenger R/T with a 5.7L Hemi costs \$31K, and the SuperCat GSS Challenger conversion with Hurst upgrades adds \$21K on top of that. (A separate SuperCat Appearance Package with the Hellcat's looks, but without the Hurst upgrades, is available as well for \$6K.)

Putting it simply, the SuperCat is the Hellcat for everyman. It looks just like its super star sibling, yet costs only a fraction of the money, reminiscent of the original 1968



Back in 1968 he took it on his own to drop the 440 from the

captivated by the idea of a Challenger that looked



Road Runner: The "Beeper" was the affordable muscle car that Plymouth created to meet the budgetary reality of then young baby boomers.

Regardless of whether the Challenger of your dreams is an R/T, an R/T Scat Pack or a full-boat SRT-8, the Hurst SuperCat GSS package can make the 2015 or 2016 Challenger



of your choice look just like a Hellcat. Plus, rather than paying whatever the market will bear for a Hellcat, to say

nothing of waiting for months and months in the hope that yours will be built, start by walking right into a Dodge dealer and negotiate your

best deal on one of these readily available models, either from inventory or by ordering one from the factory.

Next, all you have to do is have the Hurst SuperCat GSS package installed. The conversions are done in Southern California. You can ship it to Mr. Norm's, or if you've got some vacation time, simply drive it out to sunny SoCal and spend some days soaking up sun at the beach while your stock Challenger is morphed into a SuperCat GSS. If you ordered a new Challenger, your dealer can drop-ship it from the factory directly to Mr. Norm's for the conversion. Either way, it's an easy process, and only takes about four weeks in all once your stock Challenger arrives.

The Hurst SuperCat GSS features many of the same parts used on the Hurst Hellcat GSS, plus all of the factory parts that give the Hellcat its unique appearance. These include the front fascia, upper and lower grilles, spoiler and headlight bezels, along with the hood and scoops. The front end is even assembled using the same kind of plastic rivets, screws and hardware that are used on



the production line on the Hellcat.

The Hellcat influence can be seen in many of the components chosen for the SuperCat. These include Hurst lowering springs with a higher spring rate for a more aggressive stance and better handling. Rolling stock for the SuperCat GSS consists of 20

x 10 Hurst Stunner wheels matched with BF Goodrich 275/40ZR20 tires at all four corners, again just like those on the Hellcat GSS.

Freer breathing comes courtesy of a Hellcat cool air intake and an available Hurst three-inch, ss cat-back dual exhaust system by Flowmaster. These are the many of the same

specifications that make the Hellcat such a potent package, further infusing the SuperCat with a higher level of performance.

(The Kenne Bell blower shown here is an available upgrade, good for anywhere from 650 hp for the street, to 1000 or more horses for track duty.)

The Hellcat is undeniably one of the most exciting muscle cars ever produced. But for regular folks, it might as well be made of unobtainium. The Hurst SuperCat GSS is a real-world option that's readily available. If you've been longing for a Hellcat, but frustrated by the difficulty of getting one, the Hurst SuperCat GSS provides an affordable alternative that looks truly hellacious.



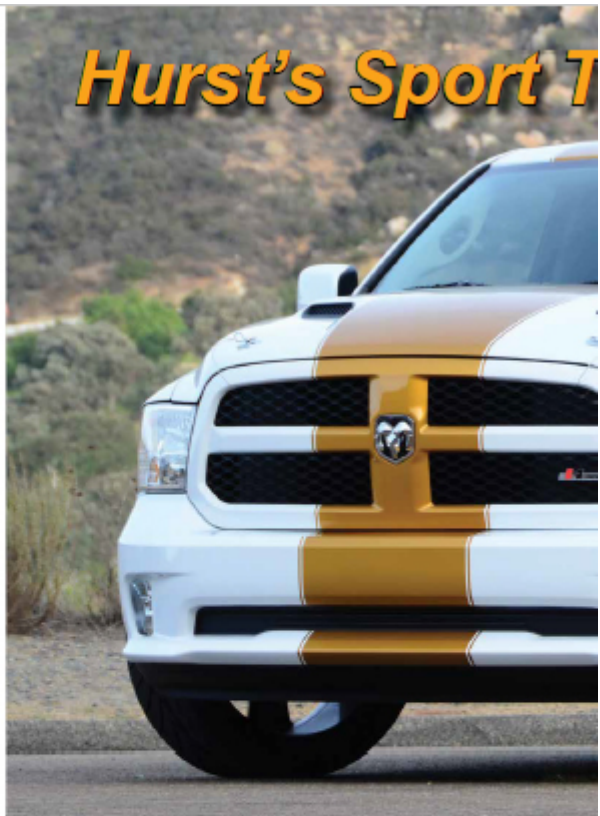
The name Hurst is synonymous with precise shifters. In addition to manufacturing the world's finest shifters, the list of products bearing the Hurst name includes custom wheels and disc brakes, along with clutches and even shock absorbers, just to name a few.

Today, Mr. Norm is proud to be working with Hurst to build the new special edition Hurst Heritage GSS Ram. Before highlighting all its enticing upgrades, a bit of history.

As far back as 1968, Hurst shifted gears, no pun intended, as the company began building special-edition vehicles as well for both street and strip. For the strip that year, Hurst worked with Chrysler to build the Super Stock Hemi Darts and Hemi Cudas.

For the street, Hurst partnered with Mr. Norm on

Hurst's Sport T



the 440 GSS Dart program, along with Oldsmobile to create the first of a long line of Hurst Olds 442s. The powerful yet refined muscle cars that Hurst created quickly became known as "Gentlemen's Hot Rods."

Over the years, Hurst has built a diverse array of specialty vehicles including the 1970 Chrysler 300H,

Truck is a Ram Rod



the 1969 S/C Rambler Scrambler and the 1971 Grand Prix SSJ, to name a just a few. Hurst continued to offer distinctive vehicle packages over several decades, and in 2008 entered the modern muscle car era with a special edition of the reborn Dodge Challenger.

Today, the legend



continues, with a comprehensive lineup of Hurst GSS Challengers. The one big difference now, however, is that unlike in 1968 when Hurst built the 440 GSS Darts for Norm, instead the Hurst vehicles are built by Mr. Norm. But the one thing that hasn't changed is the philosophy of what makes a Hurst vehicle so special. In short, they're exciting to drive, limited-edition muscle cars that are a definite cut above their production line

counterparts thanks to a major infusion of Hurst DNA.

With the new Hurst GSS Challengers making their mark on the modern muscle car scene, the inevitable question was, "What's next?" After receiving numerous calls and emails from Mopar enthusiasts who loved the new Hurst GSS Challengers, but also wanted a truck that evoked the flavor of a true "Gentlemen's Hot Rod," Mr. Norm got busy creating

a hot new Ram worthy of being called a Hurst GSS.

The Hurst Heritage GSS Ram is the result of numerous brainstorming sessions that inspired the artist's rendering prepared by noted designer Ben Hermance, which helped chart the direction for the build of the sport truck seen here. Right from the get-go, the primary requirement was to ensure that the design stayed faithful to the Hurst legacy. One look, and you can see that it's all that





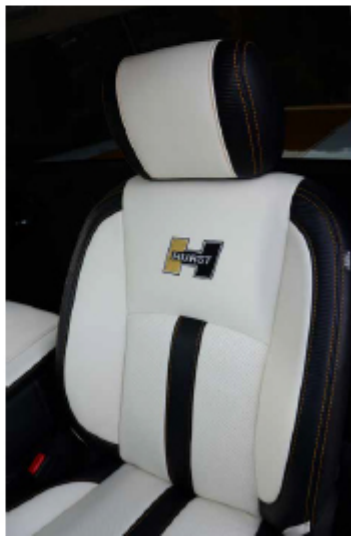
and more. Unlike many of the lookalike vehicles on the road today, the Hurst GSS Heritage Ram reminds us of the mighty Mopars from the 1960s with so much character that you could recognize them from a block away.

The popular Sixties marketing slogan, "It's what's up front that counts" is the perfect way to visualize the impact of the new Hurst GSS Ram. From the lowered stance and wide boots, to the bold gold stripes that intersect the Challenger R/T Scat Pack style hood, the moment you see it coming, you know exactly what it is.

The exterior of the Hurst

GSS Ram has definitely been infused with a major injection of personality that puts this vehicle well above plain-vanilla pickups. In addition to the Hurst gold stripes that run over the top of the vehicle from front to back, accenting the sides are a pair that echo the appearance of those on a 1968 GTX. Other tasteful trim consist of a Mr. Norm's Ram Aero Roof Spoiler; hood pins, a SnugTop tonneau cover and a chrome fuel door. And in a salute to the

Hurst wheels of days gone by, the chrome Stunners





on the Ram are accented in gold to match the striping.

But that's just the beginning of the story. Any performance vehicle worth its salt today has to handle and run as good as it looks, and the Hurst Heritage GSS Ram is no slouch in either department. When it comes to corner carving, the Ram has been outfitted with special springs, shocks and snubbers that provide a ground hugging stance, complemented by a serious set of rollers that amplify its handling prowess. A set of sticky Nitto NT 420S 305/45R22 directional radials are wrapped around Hurst Stunner 22 x 9.5 inch wheels and give new meaning to the saying "where the rubber meets the road." Due to the wider than stock wheels and tires, a set of Bushwacker fender flares have been added to provide an additional half inch of coverage, which is just what the Hurst Shifty

Doctor would have ordered.

Under the hood, the 5.7 Hemi breathes easier through a K&N cool air intake, while a Flowmaster American Thunder cat-back dual exhaust system reduces back pressure, enabling the Hemi to sing its siren song in a commanding baritone voice. Amplifying the presence of the exhaust system are a pair five-inch polished stainless tips that fit smoothly into the fluted rear bumper.

While Mopar enthusiasts would be thrilled to see more engine upgrades, as of this writing there is no CARB-certified, street-legal tune for the 2015 to 2016 Ram available from any aftermarket company. The only performance tunes currently available are for off-road use only, and the only way to input a custom tune on a 2015 to 2016 Ram is to remove

the factory encryption chip physically from the ECM, which voids the vehicle powertrain warranty. (So the factory PCM would have to be re-installed prior to any dealer service.)

Opening the door of the Hurst GSS Ram shows that just as much thought went into the interior as the exterior. Anything but ordinary, the talented staff at Katzkin created custom leather for the Ram that is a near mirror image of the interior in the Hurst Hellcat GSS. White pearl leather has been lavished on the seating surfaces and console lid, with carbon wings providing a bold contrast to the bolsters and bold full color embroidered Hurst logos on the seat backs.

Additional details include perforated inserts for aerating the upholstery,



and top stitching that discretely infuses the interior with just the right amount of gold to match the exterior. Hurst logo plush carpet mats, a GSS chrome dash emblem and a Hurst GSS serial number dash plaque lets everyone know that this truck is one of just 50 that will be available for

2016.

Priced at \$16K installed, the Hurst Heritage GSS Ram is one really cool truck that definitely stands out in a crowd. If you want a truck that blends in with the scenery, then this Ram is definitely not for you. But if you want a high-profile ride that is right in sync with



the Hurst SuperCat GSS Challenger; then the Hurst Heritage GSS Ram makes for a dynamic duo.

SOURCE:

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