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OCTOBER  
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MOPAR ACTION DOUBLE FEATURE

# WHITE & GOLD

White and gold was George Hurst's favorite color combo. The Hurst Heritage GSS can be had in the color combo of your choice. Note the Mr. Norm's adjustable Speedway Splitter and SRT8 fresh air hood with pins.





The Hurst 300s were all 2-door and shared a white and gold paint scheme similar to the Oldsmobile and Pontiac Hurst models of the day. The scooped hood was fiberglass. One promotional convertible was made and it's believed that one dealer swapped in a 426 Hemi in place of the 440 TNT mill.

STORY · Al Dante

PHOTOS · TheBruntBros

**I**t all started with shifters, but George Hurst had a bigger vision. As the percentage of manual transmission cars vs. automatics started shrinking, George looked for new ways to grow his business. He began with the Hemi Under Glass 'Cudas, then the '68 S/SB Darts and 'Cudas, as well as some GM iron, but the first true street Mopar George cranked out was the '70 the Chrysler Hurst 300.

These days, Hurst is no longer building or modifying cars on their own like in the old days. They do, however, crank out a goodly number of appearance and performance products. Why not come up with a model that would showcase their wares? Good idea, but who would build it? If there's one name in Mopar-dom that stands out in the package car field it's Mr. Norm, also with roots extending back into the 1960s. In fact, Hurst and Norm teamed up back in 1968 to build the legendary GSS 440 Dart. In more recent

times, the two teamed up to intro the 2008 Hurst Challenger. The latest Hurst/Norm joint effort is the 2015 Hurst Heritage GSS Challenger.

Here's a look at the last Hurst-built Mopar—the 300 H and the latest model as a Hurst/Mr. Norm's collaboration—the 2015 Hurst Heritage GSS Challenger.

### 1970 HURST 300

The 1970 Hurst 300 was a one-year only offering. This example is owned by Rick Morris. Rick is a big car guy. His first car was a Curious Yellow (Y3) '71 Plymouth Fury which he had restored a few years back and which he still drives. Back in the '80s, Rick noticed another big car he liked—a Chrysler Hurst 300. Rick says he noticed quite a few of these behemoths at Chryslers at Carlisle—on the show field and in the car corral. Prices for these rides at the time were too steep for Rick's budget. So he contented himself with just looking ... like everyone else.

# 1970 Hurst 300 and 2015 Hurst Heritage GSS



**LEFT:** Nifty gold wheels were part of the Hurst package. The car was rust-free when Rick picked it up but he had the body media blasted and repainted.

**BELOW:** Special hood call-out emblems were part of the package. With only 501 produced, the Hursts are the rarest of the 300s.



The decklid, like the hood, was fiberglass, with a molded spoiler and a Hurst emblem.

In 1987, Rick was thumbing through a copy of Hemmings Motor News and he saw an ad for a Chrysler Hurst 300. The seller, Don Rook, lived in Bucks County, Pa. and, according to Rick, had a collection of over 100 cars. Rick contacted Don who sent photos of the car and told Rick its history. The Chrysler had originally been bought by a guy who was in the military. He lived in Philly and commuted to his duty base in Rhode Island. The car, Don said, had rolled up only 20,000 original miles.

The photos looked great, and the low mileage was great, and the price was even greater—5 grand. Such a deal. Rick was looking for a turnkey ride as he had restored his Fury and didn't want another "project." Don shipped the car to Rick and it arrived 11:30 pm.

Rick was congratulating himself on a "steal," and was all pumped up until he opened the hood. What greeted him was the ugliest, rustiest, nastiest engine he ever saw. Sort of took the wind out of his sails. Oh well, might as well turn the key and see what happens. Fired right up but there was a coolant leak. Rick figured probably a rubber hose that had dried out over the years. He ran his hand under the exhaust manifold feeling for the core plugs to see if that was the problem. He says the plugs were so

rusty his finger went through every one of them. Rick was beginning to doubt the "low mileage" claim.

Rick dialed up Don. "What's with the rust?" Don explained that he drove the car a bit when he first bought it and then he parked it under a structure that was just a metal roof with no sides. For eleven years. The rear of the car stuck out in the breeze and rain rolling off the rusty

metal roof into the B-pillar created the rust stains. A bed of crushed stone which retained moisture was a contributing factor to the rusty engine. Remarkably, the sheetmetal survived intact.

Time to get dirty. Rick pulled the 440 and sent it to Ed Thompson, his engine builder. Ed took it all apart and showed the internals to Rick. In Ed's opinion, the big block had wear more indicative of 120K miles than 20K. Rick went a little ballistic, grabbing the phone and almost pulling it out of the wall. He punched in Don's number and would've punched Don had he been able to through the phone. Basically, he called Don a liar about the mileage. Not that it would have changed

## 300-HURST

the deal, but Rick felt he'd been screwed. Don didn't get excited but maintained a firm, monotone voice. "The car has 20,000 miles!" He didn't waver.

Ed got the go-ahead for the engine rebuild which took about a year. He also does marine engines which pays more than Mopars, and he asked Rick if he could put a couple of his big buck jobs ahead of Rick's. No problemo.

About this time, Rick joined the Chrysler 300 Club. The Hurst wasn't a Letter Series model, but the concept did fit in with the Letter cars, as it was a high-performance variant of the luxury 300, built with the input of aftermarket parts manufacturer Hurst Performance. Rick talked about his Hurst and members asked who he bought the car from. When Rick mentioned that no-good Don Rook, he was informed that Don also was club member. Oops! Rick had been talking smack about Don in the club, but members assured him that Don was a straight-up honest dude, and if he said the car had 20K miles, it had 20K miles. Double Oops!

While the engine was being rebuilt, Rick decided to go the whole nine yards and repaint the body. He wanted to start with a "fresh canvas," a concept that goes well

The only engine available for the Hurst 300 was the 375 HP 440 TNT. Rick swapped on an Edelbrock carb for more reliability and show than the tired, but similar, Carter AVS. The Hurst did not come with the chrome valve covers with the 300 Hurst call-out, nor a blue distributor cap. The TNT was good enough to propel the 4100-lb. Mope into the high 15s.





All Hurst 300s had satin tan leather interiors that were straight out of the Imperial and could be had with column- or console-mounted 727 automatics. Rick added the extra gauges and the dash top protector even though the original was in perfect shape. Factory 8-track tape player keeps Rick entertained on his journeys far and wide.



with paint. The bod was media blasted top to bottom and showed no evidence of rust or damage. It was then epoxy sealed.

About this time, Rick's Curious Yellow Fury was showing some paint issues so he had the car repainted. The job was completed and Rick trotted down to pick up the Plymouth. Oops! The car was painted the wrong color—it looked too green. 'Course Rick went ballistic again, but there was no need to pull a phone out of the wall. He talked to his painter face-to-face. The painter maintained that his supplier had given him the correct Y3 color paint. The supplier said he mixed according to PPG

specifications. PPG had just reformulated a lot of the classic Mopar colors—Hemi Orange, Curious Yellow, Plum Crazy, etc. into a modern System 2000 formulation which they said was supposed to be true to the original. The reformulated Curious Yellow was now labeled by PPG as Fire Equipment Green, they shifted the color towards green and were painting fire trucks that color. But the colors were not the same as the originals. Rick was talking lawsuit, and the PPG rep offered Rick a deal, They'd pay to have the Fury repainted and throw in an additional X dollars.

"No deal."

"OK, what do you want?"

"Paint for my Hurst 300."

PPG took the offer and Rick just had to pay for the labor on his Hurst repaint.

Once the 440 was back between the Chrysler's frame rails where it belonged, Rick opted to bring the Hurst up even further. He drove down to Musselman's Dodge in Baltimore, Maryland. They have some experienced older mechanics who worked on the classic Chryslers back in the day. One of them, Darrell,

happened to start work there in 1970, so he was familiar with the Hurst. Rick wanted the entire front end rebuilt—ball joints, tie rods etc.—everything new.

Darrell completed the job and gave Rick all the used parts. He mentioned that everything that came off the car was the original parts installed by the factory. And another thing: When Chrysler welded the undercarriage on these cars, the welding gun left a little thin tab when it pulled away. The bottom of the cars was loaded with these tabs—some 3 inches long. These tabs break off fairly quickly as the car is driven. "I can tell you," said Darrell, that this is a very low-mileage car." (Oops! again).

The interior is all original. Rick added a trio of gauges and a tach. There are deviations from stock under the hood. Rick said the 440 TNT came with a Carter AVS carb, and there were power valve\* problems. If the engine hiccupped it would blow the power valve and you'd have to remove the carb to replace it. So he elected to go with a shiny Edelbrock 750—as much for show as for function. He also used stainless fas-

\* We report, you decide. Yes, we know that Carters have no power valve.



Car is lowered via gold hammertone finish springs. Sharp 20" gold Hurst Stunner wheels get attention. Other finishes are available.

teners wherever he could instead of stock in the interest of longevity, as he's into the Hurst for the long haul.

The Hurst is fun to drive and it gets attention at shows, standing out as it does from the hordes of 'Cudas, Challengers and Chargers. The Chrysler 300 Club believes there may not be more than 100 or so survivors from the original 501 produced.

## 2015 HURST HERITAGE GSS CHALLENGER

The 2015 Hurst Heritage GSS Challenger featured here is based on a Challenger R/T Scat Pack equipped with a 392 Hemi and a six-speed manual transmission. Goodies abound starting with Norm's Speedway Splitter featuring adjustable Heim joints. The splitter mirrors the shape of the Speedway Rear Spoiler. The design of both incorporates Hellcat-like raised ends that accent recessed center sections. The SRT8 hood is garnished with functional hood pins and lanyards that harken back to the '71 Hemi Challenger.

On the functional side of the ledger is the open left inner headlight for increased cool air to the Hemi via a Hellcat intake tube. See? You even get a little bit of Hellcat with your Hurst. Underneath, is a set of Hurst lowering springs complemented by BF Goodrich G-Force Sport Comp 2 directional Z-Rated skins to upgrade handling. It's the wheels that stop folks in their tracks—Hurst Stunners. Triple chrome plated with diamond shaped inserts in the spokes trimmed in Hurst Gold.

Inside, the custom leather interior starts with highly bolstered Recaro-style front buckets. Backseat drivers haven't been ignored as they recline in soft, supple Katzkin Tuscany leather. The Hurst logo is embroidered into each seat back to remind you of where your money went. 'Course, the six-speed Tremec just begs for a Hurst shifter and that's what it gets—a Hurst Billet Plus model with the classic flat chrome arm and white cue ball with the shift pattern engraved on the top. A Hurst Heritage GSS Serial Number Dash Plaque attests to authenticity.

A serial numbered turnkey Hurst Heritage GSS Challenger will set you back about 16 grand (plus the car, of course). They're available in all factory colors, but production is limited to only 50 cars. Components featured on the vehicle also can be purchased separately. For more info, contact the Hurst/Mr. Norm's performance rep at 760-612-6365. More info and complete specs can be found on our website. ●



Stock Hemi is dressed with gold valve covers and logo'd shock towers. Air intake is a Hellcat piece.



Rear features Speedway rear spoiler with Hurst logo and polished exhaust tips. Fuel door sports Norm's logo.



Interior goodies include Mr. Norm's Start/Stop button, dash plaque, Upgraded Katzkin Tuscany leather seats with Hurst logo, plush logo'd floor mats and classic Hurst shifter.



Fender decal tells the story as there is no hood badge.

