

# OVERKILL

Robert Killian's 2,000hp Model A Is One Crazy Street Car.

This car refuses to fall into a category, and that's exactly how Robert Killian planned it. He wanted it to be ridiculous, fast, and it had to be street legal. How'd he do? His '28 Ford Model A sedan took two and a half years to build, and it offers enough entertainment value to keep a garage occupied for days. It's long and low and patina'd—but far from ratty.

Have you noticed the engine yet? It's the master act of overkill: an all-aluminum, 420ci Ford Hemi built by Jon Kaase Racing Engines, which is a little more than an hour away from Robert's home in Canton, Georgia. Jon sells these as crate packages and is secretive about the specifics, but rest assured, it's ludicrous in every area. On the outside alone, there are those absurd Kaase Pro Stock heads, the dry-sump setup, and a flawlessly executed aluminum sheetmetal intake topped with split Dominators with a total of 2,800 cfm. It gulps VP Racing C3 fuel at a quick pace. Jon won't disclose the horsepower, but we know it made more than 1,600 lb-ft of torque, which is a sign that it made north of 2,000 hp, according to Robert—and note that there's no nitrous or boost here. Behind

the Ford Hemi is a bulletproof ATI SuperGlide transmission, which uses an 8-inch torque converter that stalls to 4,800 rpm on the line.

When Robert began the build, he talked it over with good friend and chassis builder Steve Tucker of Southeast Race Cars in Ball Ground, Georgia. Robert wanted to make sure the proportions were correct, so ride height, wheelbase, and engine

placement were big topics of discussion. When plans went into motion, Steve built a double-framed chassis from chromemoly tubing. Steve has built a number of drag cars, but Robert's vision was definitely out of the ordinary, so the two worked hand in hand to get the right result.

At 130 inches, the sedan's wheelbase has been stretched more than 2 feet, and the custom, front-mounted fuel cell and wheelie bars add to the

long and low appearance. Normally, a drag racing chassis of this caliber would have a strut-style front suspension, but Robert wanted a transverse spring and dropped axle to keep the hot rod look. A Super Bell aluminum I-beam axle is held in place with a Pete & Lakes spring and hairpin radius rods, while hot rod-style disc brakes roll on either side. Out back, the rear suspension is all drag-car equipment, with an RJ Racercars four-link

setup attached to an RJ Pro Mod-style fabricated rear-end housing. Drag tires on all four corners push the limits of Robert's street car claims, but he's OK, with driving on the street with race rubber. The car has working lights, current registration, and insurance.

Since finishing the car in mid-2011, he's been working out the bugs at various nostalgia drag racing events. He's yet to make a full pass, naturally, and his best e.t. so far is 8.08 at 177 mph. Robert admits it was a partial-throttle run because of track conditions. Theoretically, with a weight of 2,780 pounds and 2,000 hp on tap, the car should dip into the 6s at well over 200 mph, so there's a lot of room for improvement. That didn't stop us from having to share it. It's got an undeniable presence, and that's exactly what Robert wanted from day one.

By Tommy Lee Byrd

Photography:  
Tommy Lee Byrd

> The Model A body was in great shape in with little rust or damage, so Robert and Steve concentrated mainly on body modifications, such as chopping the top, filling the roof insert, and recessing the taillights and license plate. They also added bear-claw door latches for safety.



> Jon Kaase Racing Engines built the all-aluminum Ford Hemi, packing it with high-end parts. The enormous engine offers big-time wow factor and creates more than 2,000 hp using a healthy dose of VP Racing C23 fuel.



> Throughout the build, it was imperative that each and every component be NHRA-legal because Robert planned to run a few Top Sportsman races in addition to exhibition passes at nostalgia drag racing events. The double-rail chassis and rollcage are made from chrome-moly tubing and are certified for 6.00 or slower.



> The rear end is packed with a Mark Williams 9 1/2-inch centersection, which features a 3.90 gearset and 40-spline axles. Steve Tucker of Southeast Hot Rods fabricated new wheelhubs to accommodate the massive slicks. The Billet Specialties Comp 5 wheels measure 15x3 1/2" and 16x16 inches. Then there are the wicked chutes and wheelie bars.

"I have two words for this guy: Drag Week™"  
—David Freiburger

"People don't know what to think when they see a car like this on the street."  
—Robert Killian

> What do you get when you mix 33x10.5-16W rear tires, a 3.90 gear ratio, and 7,500 rpm in high gear? The answer is nearly 200-mph wheel speeds during the burnout, which provides a plume of smoke nearly as impressive as the car itself.



> The 820ci engine sounds wicked at idle and even more so at full song, as massive quantities of air pass through the hand-fabricated, stainless-steel, 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch header tubes and Burns mufflers.

> The front suspension is drastically different from that of most drag cars of this nature. To keep the hot rod theme going, Robert had Steve build in a Pete & Jake's front suspension complete with an aluminum I-beam axle and Super Stopper disc brakes. **HRM**

