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CAMARO PERFORMERS

MAY 2013 VOLUME 10 NUMBER 4

THE

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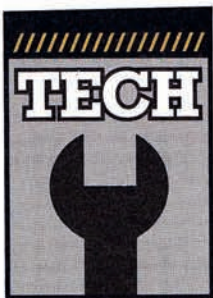
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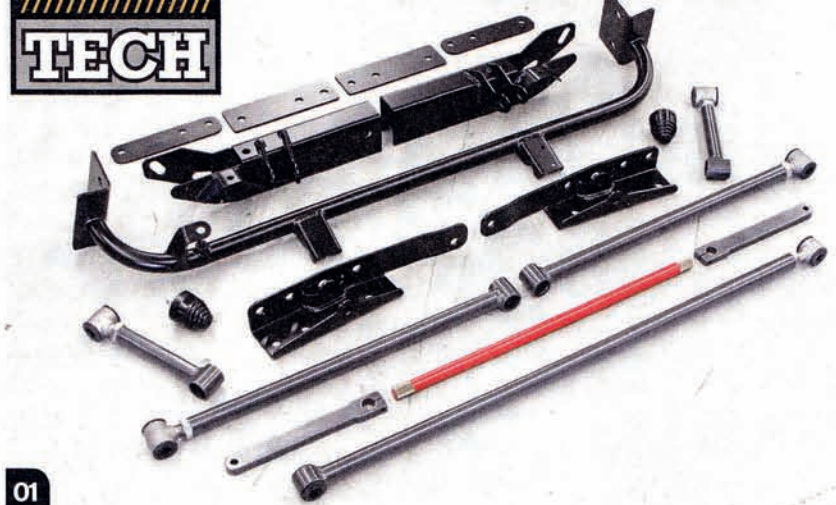
By Steven Rupp

• **Last issue we** dove headfirst into a bone-stock '67 RS Camaro. Our goal was to transform this tired F-body, into a fun street machine that could fit into a workin' Joe's budget. Our first foray was stuffing a Heidts bolt-on suspension and Wilwood brakes under the nose, and this month we are tackling the other end of this tired turkey. Instead of going the typical route of dropped leaf springs, we decided to up the budget a bit and try out Heidts' new bolt-in four-link kit. At \$1,500 it's more money than a \$700 set of leaves, but it will bring a ton more tuning potential to the table and help our '67 get with the 21st century program. Plus it's just cool, and when building a street machine you do get points for being cool.

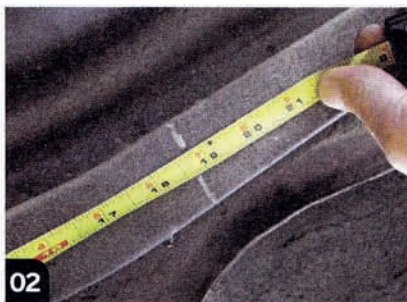


Of course, due to the name of our magazine, the parts need to work as good or better than they look. Given this implied mission statement, we made sure to baseline the RS on both its stock rollers and a set of new Mickey Thompson street tires wrapped on 17-inch YearOne rollers. This way we can let you know how much of the performance gains can be attributed to the tires and how much to the Heidts suspension kit. We also tackled the

abysmal brakes by installing a track-capable, yet wallet-friendly Wilwood four-wheel disc brake system and a CPP close-ratio steering system that should keep our Camaro pointed just where we want it. Unfortunately, we had an issue with our testing venue and couldn't make it in time for this issue, but we promise you a full-on blow-by-blow rundown of the results in the next issue. Yeah, we know the suspense will most likely kill ya.



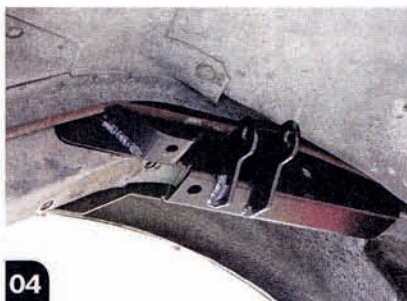
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01 Here are the main components for the Heidts four-link kit (PN RC-101-WT-H, \$1,495). It came with all the brackets, bushings, links, basic coilover shocks, and hardware needed to get the suspension up and in the car. It shipped to us in bare steel, so we dropped off the parts at Eddie Motorsports in Rancho Cucamonga, California, for some powdercoating.

02 Following the instructions, we measured from the rear leaf spring mount forward 18.75 inches and made a mark. It's important that the kit be installed square, although if you're off a touch it can be adjusted for with the links.

03 That mark (arrow) showed us where to put the back edge of the first frame bracket. Once lined up, we used a dead-blow hammer to tap it over the factory framerail. This kit is a bolt-on deal, but we don't see any reason why you couldn't weld the brackets in place if you so desired.

04 On the passenger side we had a small clearance issue with the OEM fuel line. Using a small pry bar, we were able to move the line out of the way enough to get the bracket in place.



06

05 Using the first bracket as a guide, we then installed the next frame/floor bracket.

06 The link bracket, which pivoted off the last hole of the first bracket, swung up until it was flat to the Camaro's floorpan. Once there, three 1/2-inch holes were drilled through the framerail and the supplied Grade 5 fasteners were used to hold it in place. You can't see it, but there's a small steel plate on the other side of the framerail to help strengthen the area.



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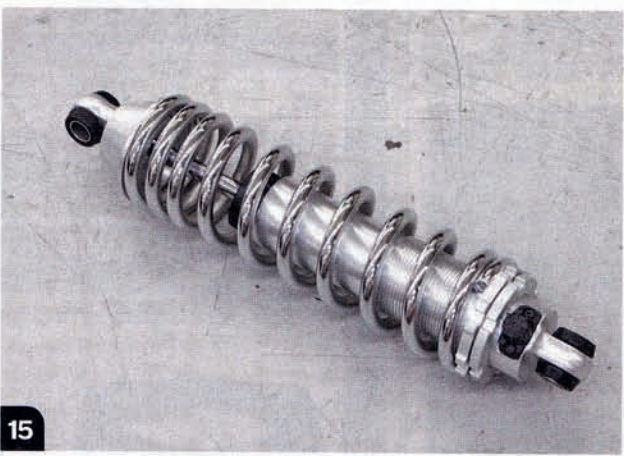
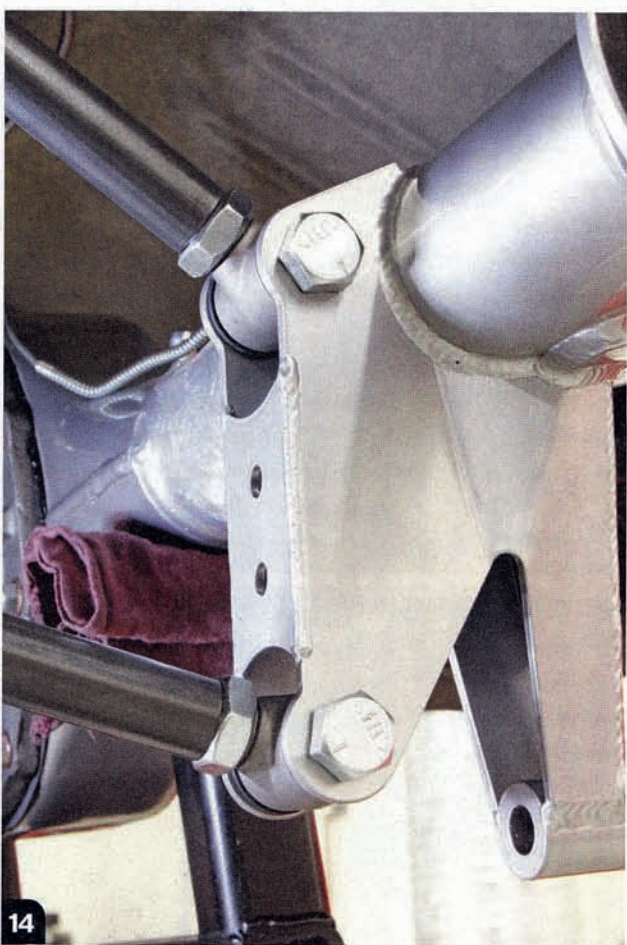
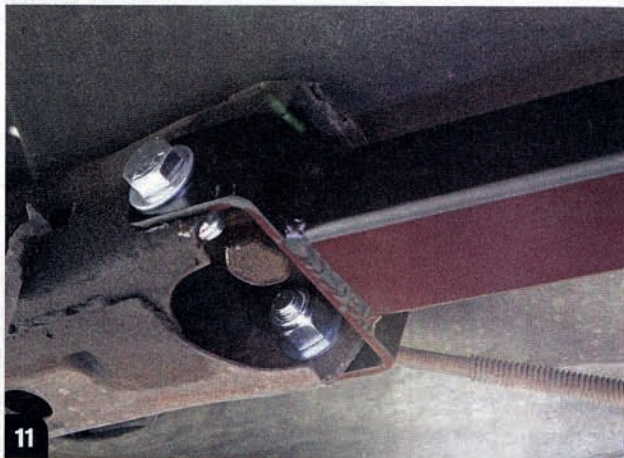
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07 We then pulled the back seat, drilled three holes, and bolted the plate through the floor using another "sandwich" plate on the inside of the car. This was repeated on the passenger side.

08 With the frame mounting plates installed on both sides of the car, we then bolted on the crossbar and made sure everything was nice and tight.

09 The forward mounting points for the lower links utilize the GM leaf spring pockets. First, we drilled out the holes to $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch and then used the supplied bushings to mount the bars.

10 Next, we installed the subframe connectors (PN RC-102, \$180). Like the rest of the suspension, these are bolt-in deals and came in raw steel.



11 Here you can see how the connector interfaced with the GM front subframe. Again, some drilling was required, but this should really help stiffen up the car.

12 And here's how the assembled spring pocket integrated with the frame and the new subframe connector. We also made sure to properly locate the small spacer washer (arrow).

13 The upper (short) links were then installed on their respective mounts. The space for the nyloc is tight, but Heidts supplied a thin lock nut that worked perfectly.

14 With the four links attached to the car, we could then raise the housing into place and attach them, as shown.

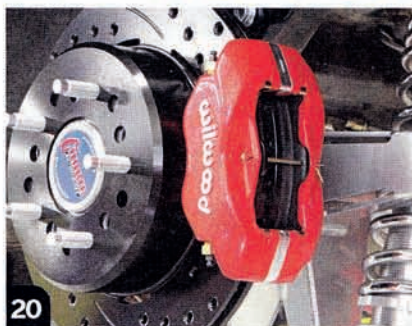
15 Just like we did up front, we upgraded the rear shocks to single-adjustable billet versions. Also, to make adjustment easier, we ordered the bearing kit and a spanner wrench from Heidts.

16 After assembling the coilovers, we hung them from the upper frame mounts.





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17 We then attached the coilovers to the brackets on the housing.

18 With both shocks in place, we could then install the Panhard rod (PHR). This is where we found out that the PHR had to be installed before the driver-side shock was put in place. Don't make the same mistake.



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19 To match our front Wilwood brakes, we went with their simple rear disc brake conversion kit (PN 140-7140, \$689). The first step was pulling out the Currie axles and sliding on the backing plates and e-brake assembly.

20 Next, we slid on the 12-inch e-coated drilled and slotted Wilwood



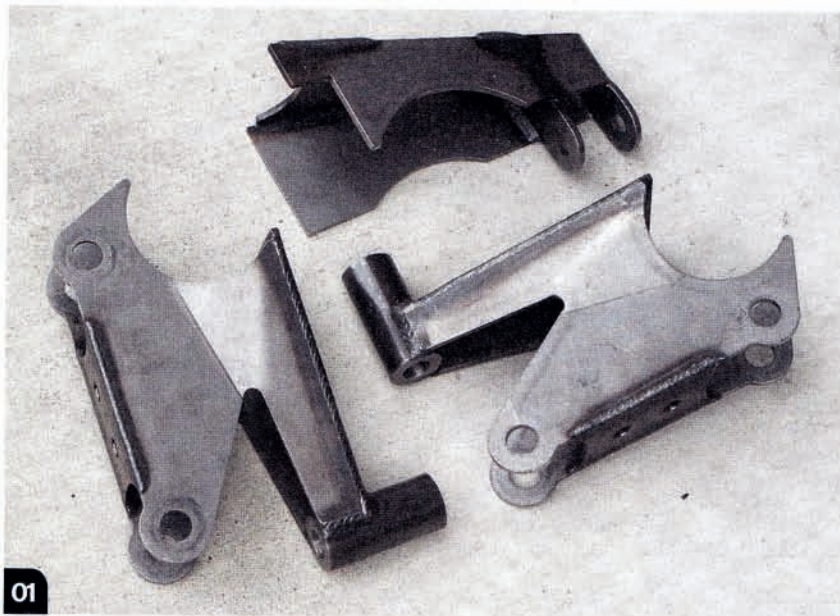
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rotors. With the rotor installed, we then bolted on the four-piston Dynalite calipers and plumbed the brakes using a brake line kit from CPP.

21 The last step was to install the optional and unique Heidts rear sway bar system (\$160) and recheck that all of our bolts were snugged up. When the weather clears, we'll get the Camaro properly aligned and then hit our testing venue to see what all these shiny parts and sweat equity got us. Look for a full report in the next issue!

Big Piece of the Puzzle

The biggest decision we faced in going with a four-link was what to do about the rear-end. The RS came to us with the original, worn and tragically weak, early 10-bolt rearend. Now, we could have had the four-link brackets welded to the diff, but we would have still had a weak and worn-out peg-leg 10-bolt. Another option would have been to rebuild the unit, add a posi, and strengthen it up a bit. After weighing the costs we decided to go another route. Heidts offers a new 9-inch housing, with the required brackets already properly welded in place for \$695. More than just buying the Heidts bracket kit, but the end result will be a lot stouter and to be honest it's a lot less hassle than working over the 10-bolt. Now if our Camaro had a sweet 12-bolt we would have went the other route.



01 The bracket kit from Heidts will set you back around \$140 and we would recommend having a pro shop, like Currie Enterprises, weld them to your housing since it's easy to warp the tubes and end up with other issues down the line.

02 To solve our positraction deficiency we went with this Eaton Truetrac 31-spline unit (PN 913A586, \$549). The Truetrac limited-slip uses a bulletproof helical gear arrangement that is both smooth and quiet. We've used this in every 9-inch rear we've ran and it's never given us an ounce of trouble.

03 Currie mated the new Eaton to a set of Motive 3.50 gears. We figure this ring-and-pinion ratio will work well in our automatic trans-equipped Camaro. The red-anodized pinion color may look pricey, but it was only \$4 more than Currie's standard iron version. We topped it off with a 1350 yoke.

04 For axles, we chose these Currie cut-to-fit sticks. They come with extra-long splined ends and, as the name implies, you simply cut them to fit your need and then chamfer the edges on a grinder. Perfect for the do-it-yourselfer.

05 And here's our new Currie 9-inch rear all together and ready to go under the car. We're into this for a couple of grand, but this will be the last rear our Camaro will ever need.

