

So Lo



ow Project

This Slammed 1956 Ford F-100 Is a One-Man Backyard Build!

Feature Story | By Tim Bernsau | Photography by Mike Basso

The shop that built this beautiful blue ground-scraping F-100 doesn't have a TV show. Or a website. Or a crew. Or even a name—unless “Jess’ backyard” counts as a name.

Jess Roman's 1956 Ford is a testimony to the fact that enthusiasts working at home with real-world budgets are building great classic trucks. The real investment is time, dedication, patience, and a willingness to ask questions. It doesn't hurt to have some imagination and talent.

This truck was the second truck project for Jess. His first was also a 1956 F-100 small-window that he bought in the '70s. He was right out of high school and paid about \$700 for the truck. The local auto parts store and friends in a local truck club were a great source of help with the project, and Ed “Big Daddy” Roth even contributed some dashboard pinstriping.



Eventually Jess lost interest in the truck, trading it for a Harley chopper. The last time he saw the '56 was in the late '70s. By then it had been abandoned.

A family, a house, and a carpentry career kept Jess out of the garage until a few years ago. A co-worker had started a 1956 F-100 build but, like Jess, had moved away from it. It was not running and sitting in storage. For Jess, this was his chance to finish what he'd started years ago.

He began the new project by tearing the truck down to the frame. Seeing the F-100

completely disassembled, his first thought was “Man, look at all these parts!”

Without a lot of experience, he started methodically. He invested in a MIG welder and compressor. He asked questions every time he went to a truck show or a swap meet, and listened to advice from people who'd already done what he was doing for the first time.

Starting with the chassis, Jess stripped the frame to bare metal and filled the holes, then stiffened the 'rails with 6x³/₁₆-inch boxing plates. Rear 'rails were notched to drop the truck to

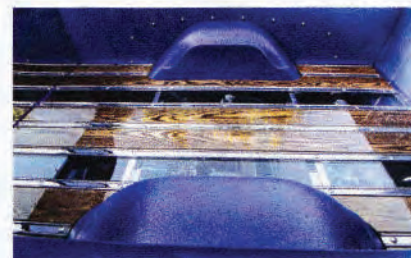
“Appreciation from others is a great feeling, but for Jess, the greater feeling comes from knowing that the work that went into this classic truck is his own.” ★



bed stake pockets, and rolled the end of the bed. Other custom treatments include the frenched antenna and the frenched license plate in the smoothed tailgate. The bed was modified with wheel tubs and a polished stainless sheet at the front. The floor is light oak with dark walnut stain, and clearcoat tinted with House of Kolor Blue Ice Pearl. A pair of Lexan panels reveals the polished chassis components beneath the bed. The '56 sits as low as possible over the 29x15x15 and 26x8x15 Mickey Thompson Sportsman radials, wrapped around 15x12 and 15x8 Weld Pro Star wheels.

Some friends from high school days pitched in to help with the paint. Jess chose House of Kolor Stratto Blue Shimrin with some turquoise pearl to increase the eye-appeal.

Upholstering the interior was one of the few jobs Jess turned over to a pro shop. Southern California Upholstery in Placentia covered the stock bench, door panels, and



street level. Chassis upgrades include a Classic Performance Products Mustang II-style frontend, and a modified four-link locating a 9-inch rear narrowed by Currie Enterprises. Pete & Jake's shocks and Firestone airbags were added at both ends. Polished stainless components give the suspension a show-quality appearance.

With the chassis underway, Jess focused on powering the truck. Ford power was the only way to go, and a 351W built into a stroker 393 provides plenty of that. Service Center in Lomita, California, handled the machining and assembly, using a Scat crank, Windsor rods, and Probe 10.1:1 pistons. Edelbrock had the aluminum heads, as well as the Air-Gap intake, with a Holley 670 on top. A polished stainless exhaust system from The Muffler Man in Placentia, California, connects Sanderson block huggers to Flowmaster mufflers. The C6 trans, bought at the Pomona swap meet, went to Remac Transmissions in San Dimas, California, for a rebuild.

The brightwork you see all over the truck is a distinguishing feature. Dean's Polishing of Buena Park did much of the stainless and aluminum polishing. The chrome was handled by La Habra Plating.

Jess was obviously feeling confident after finishing the chassis and powertrain, and turned his attention toward building a body and bed equally as impressive. In addition to reconstructing the cab top, Jess filled the seams and

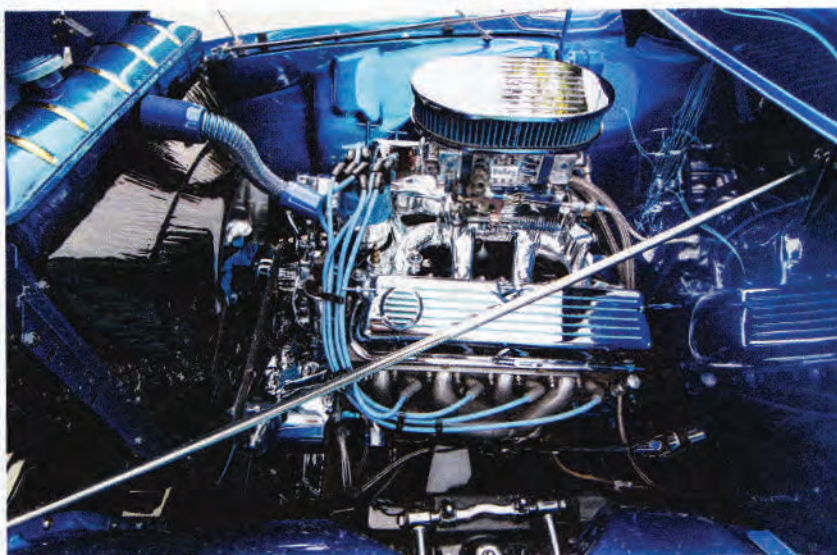




headliner; the darker leather is saddle toned and the lighter is biscuit. An aluminum insert was built into the stock dash for the Dolphin gauges. A Moon tach is mounted on the CPP steering column. The tri-spoke billet steering wheel is leather wrapped and accented with body-color paint. A B&M shifter is housed in a custom console, built by Jess.

As soon as the project was complete, Jess started taking it to Southern California truck shows, including the F-100 Western Nationals where the '56 won Best of Show and Truck of the Year. A drawing of Jess Roman's F-100 is being used on promotional materials and the event T-shirt for the 2016 show.

Appreciation from others is a great feeling, but for Jess, the greater feeling comes from knowing that the work that went into this classic truck is his own. And the satisfaction of putting "a" these parts" back together without a single part left over is probably the greatest award he could win.



1956 FORD F-100

Jess Roman

CHASSIS

- > **FRAME:** STOCK 1956 FORD, BOXED AND C-NOTCHED IN THE REAR
- > **REAR END / RATIO:** NARROWED FORD 9-INCH WITH TRU-TRAC POSI / 3.73:1
- > **REAR SUSPENSION:** MODIFIED FOUR-LINK, PANHARD BAR, PETE & JAKE'S SHOCKS, FIRESTONE DOUBLE-BELLOWS AIRBAGS
- > **REAR BRAKES:** FORD 11-INCH DRUMS
- > **FRONT SUSPENSION:** CPP MUSTANG II STYLE IFS, POWER STEERING RACK, ANTI-ROLL BAR, PETE & JAKE'S SHOCKS, FIRESTONE DOUBLE-BELLOWS AIRBAGS
- > **FRONT BRAKES:** CPP 11-INCH DISCS, CPP BOOSTER/MASTER ASSEMBLY WITH PROPORTIONING VALVE
- > **FRONT WHEELS:** WELD PRO-STAR 15X8
- > **REAR WHEELS:** WELD PRO-STAR 15X12
- > **FRONT TIRES:** 26X8X15 MICKEY THOMPSON SPORTSMAN
- > **REAR TIRES:** 29X15X15 MICKEY THOMPSON SPORTSMAN
- > **GAS TANK:** STOCK 18-GALLON

DRIVETRAIN

- > **ENGINE:** FORD 351 WINDSOR, STROKED TO 393CI
- > **HEADS:** EDELBROCK ALUMINUM
- > **CRANKSHAFT:** SCAT 9000 SERIES
- > **PISTONS:** PROBE FORGED DISH 10.1:1
- > **CAMSHAFT:** ENGLE ROLLER
- > **AIR CLEANER:** CHROME OVAL WITH K&N FILTER
- > **INTAKE:** EDELBROCK AIR-GAP ENDURASHINE
- > **CARBURETOR:** HOLLEY 670-CFM
- > **RADIATOR:** STOCK FOUR-ROW
- > **HEADERS:** SANDERSON BLOCK HUGGERS
- > **EXHAUST / MUFFLERS:** POLISHED STAINLESS / FLOWMASTER
- > **TRANSMISSION:** FORD C6 BUILT BY

REMAC TRANSMISSION

> **SHIFTER:** B&M

BODY

- > **STYLE:** PICKUP
- > **MODIFICATIONS:** REBUILT CAB TOP, FRENCHED ANTENNA, FRENCHED LICENSE PLATE
- > **FENDERS FRONT / REAR:** ORIGINAL STEEL WITH REAR TUBS
- > **HOOD:** ORIGINAL
- > **GRILLE:** STOCK, CHROMED
- > **BED:** STOCK WITH FILLED STAKE POCKETS, STAINLESS FRONT BED PANEL, LIGHT OAK FLOOR WITH DARK WALNUT STAIN AND TINTED CLEAR, LEXAN PANELS, SMOOTHED TAILGATE
- > **BODYWORK AND PAINT:** OWNER JESS ROMAN WITH PAINT HELP FROM FRIENDS
- > **PAINT TYPE / COLOR:** HOUSE OF KOLOR STRATTO BLUE SHIMRIN WITH TURQUOISE PEARL CHROME: LA HABRA PLATING
- > **HEADLIGHTS / TAILLIGHTS:** STOCK
- > **BUMPERS:** STOCK, CHROMED

INTERIOR

- > **DASHBOARD:** STOCK WITH ALUMINUM GAUGE INSERT
- > **CONSOLE:** FABRICATED BY OWNER WITH CUP HOLDERS AND SHIFTER OPENING
- > **GAUGES:** DOLPHIN WITH MOONEYES TACH
- > **STEREO:** AM/FM/CD UNIT
- > **STEERING WHEEL:** AFTERMARKET ALUMINUM LEATHER-WRAPPED
- > **STEERING COLUMN:** CPP TILT
- > **SEATS:** FACTORY BENCH
- > **UPHOLSTERY BY:** SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA UPHOLSTERY
- > **MATERIAL / COLOR:** LEATHER / SADDLE AND BISCUIT
- > **CARPET / COLOR:** EL DORADO CUT PILE / CARAMEL