

# The design began humbly with the British tube-framed Diablo, using an Austin Maxi powertrain

In amazingly short time he made the body changes, pulled molds, fabricated parts. The finish work was done by Charlie Eddy-ex-Kastner, ex-Kent Racing. The plot thickens.

At about that point, Buick, despite Herb Fischel's initial interest, wished Hitter and Gale good luck and Godspeed and see you around some time. Re-enter Ray Geddes, now back in Carroll Shelby's employ, with Lew Spencer—ex-Shelby race team manager and long-time friend of Kastner. Passing through Arkay (Kas had turbocharged a Charger 2.2 for Direct Connection; Shelby's group works with Chrysler developing cars and parts for your catalogue and showroom pleasure), Geddes and Spencer spotted the restyled AC. Before you could say Hemi-Cuda, the car had been whisked off to the Chrysler-Shelby High Performance Center in Santa Fe Springs, at the east edge of Los Angeles, for an engine transplant. Out with the Buick, in with the Mopar.

First installed was a normal 2.2. It all fit so well, the Chrysler crew, project administrator and chief mechanic Steve Hope, teamed with development engineer Neil Hanneman under engineer Scott Harvey, who runs the Center, whipped out the standard engine and installed a new Bosch/Chrysler fuel-injected, turbo-

charged G-24 engine and new 5-speed transaxle. *Serious* go-fast goodies, these. All details remain unresolved. Best guess is that Chrysler, through the offices of Harvey/Hope/Hanneman, will finish development of spring rates, suspension setting, shift cable design, engine control computer wiring, gear ratios, wheel and tire sizes, swaybars, and, finally, engine installation particulars.

Chrysler will then supply engines to Hitter and Gale, who will have them installed in British-built AC chassis. Bodies will

probably be built here in California.

Lee Iacocca has his heart set on a mid-engined "Pantera II," and the AC-Chrysler is looked on as a step toward that. Speaking of Iacocca, the car was reserved as a surprise for The Chairman, who was being shown around the Chrysler-Shelby Center at superbowl time.

Did he like it? Would they be working on it now if he hadn't?

Don't call us, call: AC Cars of North America, 2210 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 282, Santa Monica, CA 90403. 

