

MAKING DOUBLE TIME



The 2021 MCACN made up for the 2020 Wuhan delay with great Mopes from all over and then some.

STORY BY GEOFF STUNKARD PHOTOS BY GEOFF STUNKARD AND DAN GALLO

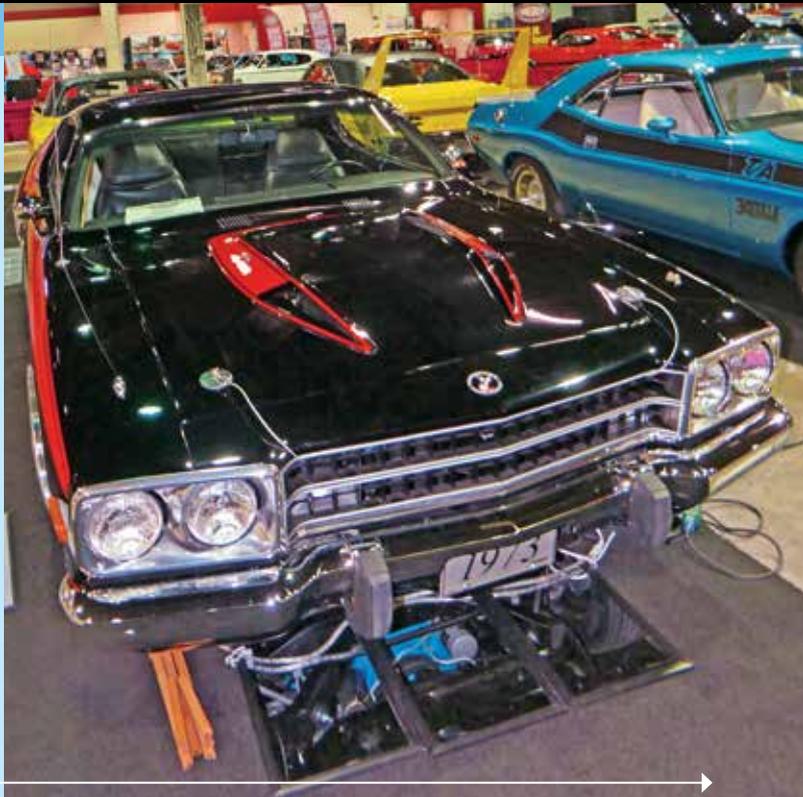
The Donald Stephens Convention Center in Rosemont, IL, is minutes from O'Hare Airport and is the location of this show each year. Hotels and food are all within walking distance.



The crazy FM3 Panther Pink Challenger T/A of Corey & JoAnne Flick was among the highlights of this huge groups of AAR/TA invitational cars, another 2020 plan that took an extra year to complete.

WHAT A DIFFERENCE a year makes. Especially when that year was 2020 and everything under the sun was being cancelled by the CCPlague (which was no fault of the oppressed people living over there, either). That in turn meant the long-running Muscle Car & Corvette Nationals would also not take place as usual. In mid-2021, manager Bob Ashton told us that he had gotten a personal letter directly from the Illinois Governor's office stating that the 2022 edition of the show in its Donald E. Stephens Convention Center in the Chicago suburb of Rosemont would be allowed to happen. So, once again on its traditional weekend before Thanksgiving, cars arrived in both personal trailers and by the semi-load to fill the cavernous building, while fans filled up O'Hare Airport's travel vans for the biggest indoor extravaganza showcasing the musclecar hobby.

For the first time, my arrival to the event was by highway, as Dale Mathews was invited to display his 1970 Bobby Isaac-ordered Challenger R/T in the year-late '70 Challenger Reunion area, so I rode up with him. Meanwhile, a number of great other cars made their debut here, as did celebrities galore and even some Brand X iron worth seeing. We'll stop the praises here, leaving some space for the photos to prove we again have "been there, done that." We're already looking forward to 2022's event. But you knew that already, didn't cha...



These days, it doesn't need to be a high compression Hemi to rate space to display here. Right inside the entrance, Mark Sekula and the crew from Magnum Auto in nearby Lasalle had four cars on display, including this beautiful and quite rare 1973 440 GTX-trim Road Runner. Great work as always.



Once again, Zoo gathered the guys the who made history for a lively roundtable discussion on both Saturday and Sunday. Left to right—Paul Rossi, Butch Leal, Stunkard, Arnie Beswick (ran a Dodge in the 1950s, you know), Ted Spehar and Joe Pappas.



Show manager Bob Ashton welcomes fans with the Super Chicken Road Runner—and no blackout paint!

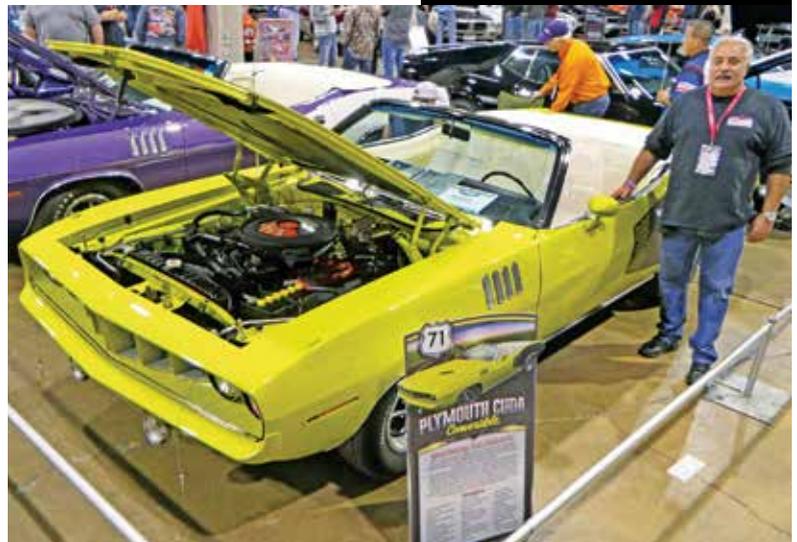


This original-owner Hemi Dodge Daytona came in with Robert and Betty Krebs, and here the car had just arrived on Thursday to get ready to go on display.

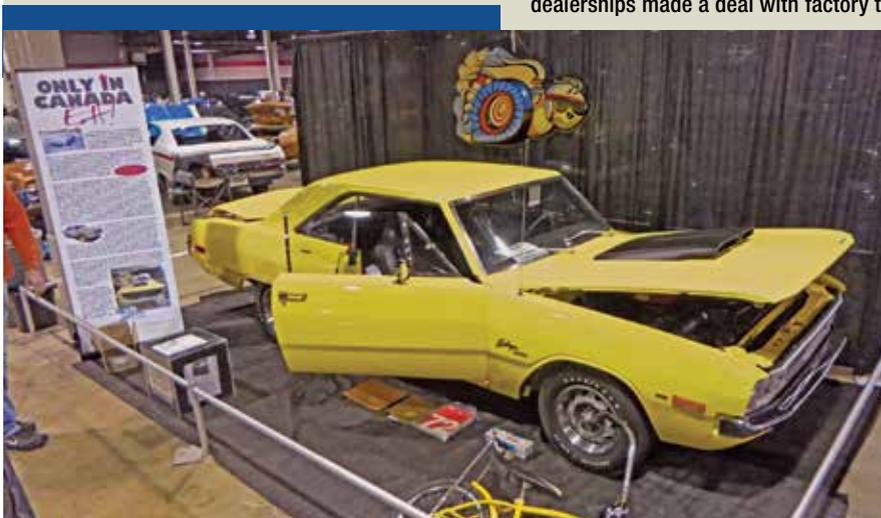
Getting our Celebrity Choice award for '21 was Mark Hoffman and his highly-optioned 1971 tri-color 383 Cuda, which was delivered new to a southern California PR firm that supplied Hollywood with cars and shows up in a B-type horror movie called "The Velvet Vampire."



Bob Riggle, seen with his legendary Hurst Hemi Under Glass Barracuda takes a rest in his custom "header recliner" after being asked for the 1000th time if he's has given Jay Leno any rides lately.



Swinger's Got a 340, Eh?

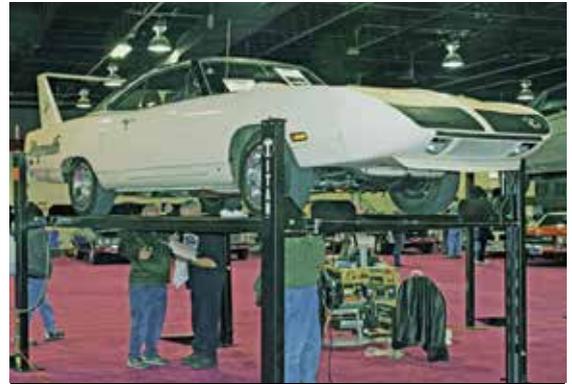


Joel Cooper of Connecticut runs the 1970 340 Swinger Registry but also has a couple of Canadian versions that were only offered north of the border. This '72 is one of 30 built that year for just two dealerships.

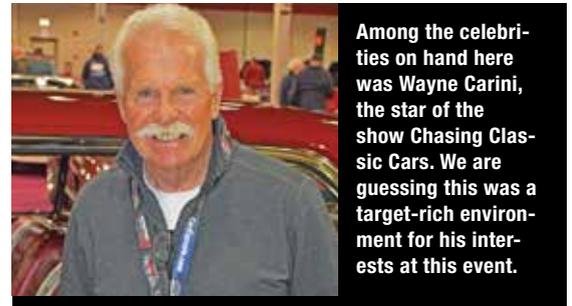
ONCE THE FASTBACK DEMON arrived, Chrysler no longer offered a 340 performance model of the standard roofline 111" wheelbase Swinger. Except...in Canada, where two dealerships made a deal with factory to build them some specials. According to owner Joel Cooper, Windsor turned out 85 of these Swinger 340 Specials in the spring of '71, and then did just 30 more in the late part of 1972's model run. This '72 car is one of 5 of that batch created for Pembina Dodge in Winnipeg (the other 25 went Crosstown Motor City in Edmonton) and is 1-of-1 as a CY3- three speed manual package. Built on June 16, 1971, it is likely one of the last 340 Specials built. Joel had a crowd of people checking it out over the weekend, as very few knew the package even existed.

The little 340 tags were mounted on the front fender, but the big giveaway was the factory hood scoop.





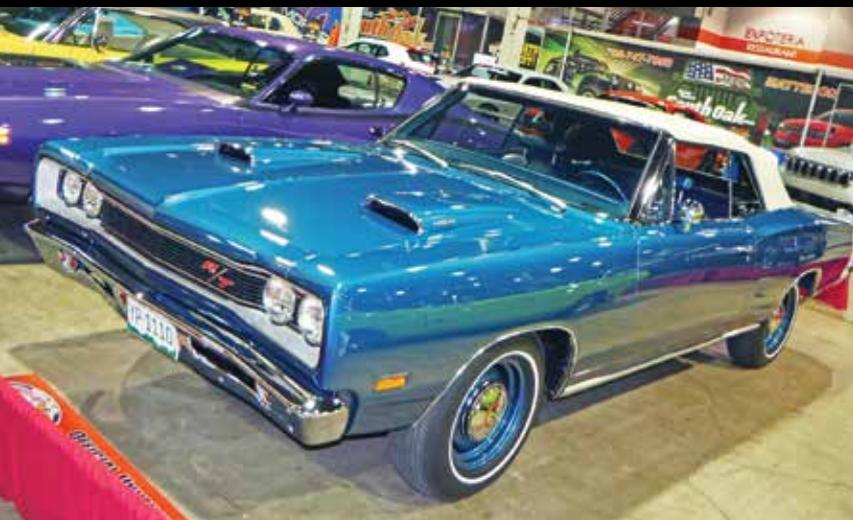
Seen up on the lift during the Vintage Certification process, the highly-original SuperBird of Doug and Chris Hammond received honors for its preservation after forensic work by the likes of Frank Badalson.



Among the celebrities on hand here was Wayne Carini, the star of the show Chasing Classic Cars. We are guessing this was a target-rich environment for his interests at this event.



Baby, it's cold outside while we run down N. River Rd. in the original Bobby Isaacs' '70 Challenger back to the parking area Sunday night. Yes, that's Gibson's Steakhouse, which will be ready to take more of our budget again next year.



Among the true rarities that made their debut here for 2021 was this 1969 Coronet Hemi R/T convertible owned by Brad Lovering, one of just 10 built and one of just 4 equipped with the A833 crashbox.

Leading off the pack in the Barn Finds / Hidden Gems section managed by Ryan Brutt was this original Hemi Daytona owned by Bob Jennings, which has been in storage for 45 years.



Parts and memorabilia vendors are also on hand at MCACN and this fragile Chrysler Sailboats dealership sign priced at \$795. quickly sold soon after the show opened.



Also in this area was an A12 Super Bee that Jim Kramer of Kramer Automotive brought in. That is none other than Ted Spehar of Motown Missile fame checking it out.



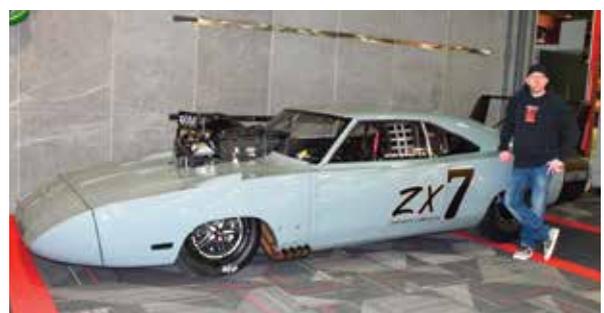
Another Joe, Joe Gouger, also had a Daytona on hand, a more modern version he runs in on the Midwest Nostalgia Pro Stock series as a tribute to the late Reid Whisnant early 80s Hemi Daytona.



Among the stellar cars in the Mopar Trans Am Invitational was this sinister Black Velvet AAR owned by Michael Ross of Ohio. The overall group was sponsored by the Wellborn Musclegar Museum.



For vintage racing fans, two of the original Motown Missiles were on hand, and Steve Atwell brought in the unrestored 1973 Rod Shop Hemi Dart, which ended up in the sportsman classes back then due to NHRA heavy pencil.



Garage Squad's Joe Zolper came in from Joliet with his supercharged '69 Daytona, which he races as time allows. It has a 512-CI aluminum Hemi with a 14-71 huffer on top, and was on special display out in the lobby where people came in. 🍷

SOURCE

2022 MCACN DATES
November 19-20, 2022
Donald E. Stephens Convention Center
www.mcacn.com