

TEXT BY TRAVIS NOACK •  
PHOTOS COURTESY OF  
AIR RIDE TECHNOLOGIES

# Velocity

AIR RIDE TECHNOLOGIES' GROUND-  
POUNING, CORNER-CARVING '68 CAMARO



■ Bret Voelkel  
Air Ride Technologies  
1968 Chevy Camaro  
Jasper, IN

**R**ipping through the gears as the engine revs higher and the suspension gobbles up all of the steep cornering and aggressive twists you can throw at it; the tires grip hard and horsepower commands you to sit still and just enjoy the ride. G-machine-style muscle cars pack all of this excitement into one rush of an experience behind the wheel. Air Ride Technologies out of Jasper, Indiana, has built several wild performance muscle cars that eat up the pavement with a vengeance. For the naysayer who believed that any air-suspended car couldn't handle it, they are now eating their words with a side of humility. Air Ride Technologies has held several track days and Street Challenge Autocross events where adjustable suspension, when properly installed and tuned, has performed flawlessly in performance track driving situations. Company owner Bret Voelkel has made it his mission to pack the features of low down fairground cruiser, smooth riding highway runner and track pavement pounder into a complete and adjustable suspension package. Proof that the company means business

on the street, the track and the fairgrounds is not only evident in the suspension products they produce, but also in the cars they build. Take the Velocity 1968 Camaro for example, there is performance on every surface of this sensational first gen, and the best part is when it is time to park and hang out, the show stance is just a click of the switch away.

The car came to A.R.T. as a six-cylinder-powered "survivor" with extremely straight sheet metal. Precision Coachworks tore into the car and began to craft the road race beauty displayed across these pages. Out came the six and in went a World Products Warhawk 427 LS engine that had been dyno proven and tuned to 614 HP. Dynatech headers add vocals to the beast, while a Vintage Air front runner system keeps it spinning. A 4I65E transmission was pro built by Bowler Transmissions and is commanded by a Twist Machine electronic paddle shifter. The Bowler box sends quick gear commands to a Ford 9-inch rearend stuffed with 3.70:1 gears and a Detroit Locker differential spinning 31-

spline Moser axles. Controlling the fuel, ignition and transmission electronics is a Big Stuff 3 EFI system and MSD electronic ignition. An Edelbrock intake and MSD throttle body gets octane cocktails into the throaty 427 as fuel is gulped from a Rick's Hot Rod stainless fuel tank. An Aeromotive A1000 fuel pump ensures speedy delivery. This gets the performance party started lighting off the 614-HP mill and allowing it to drink and spark, while Wilwood disc brakes front and rear, featuring 13-inch rotors and six-piston calipers up front combined with 12-inch rotors and four-piston calipers in the rear, handled deceleration duties. An internal parking brake integrated into the Wilwood system ensures Velocity won't make any unscheduled moves. To set off the stance with a true road race look, three-piece 18-inch classic series CCW wheels were built to slide over the studs. A pair of 18 x 8-inch CCWs was used up front with a 5.5-inch backspace, while the rear employs massive 18 x 11-inch CCWs sucked under the car with a 6.75-inch backspace. For the ultimate grip factor Velocity relies on BF Goodrich shoes

in staggered 245/40-18 front and 335/30-18 rear sizes. Detroit Speed mini tubs give the massive rear wheel and tire combination some extra breathing room.

To hammer this baby through the cones Bret relies on a Flaming River steering column hooked to a 12.7:1 ratio Detroit Speed steering box. Juice is flowed through a complete wiring system from American Autowire installed by Brit Marolf. Rounding out the interior is a RacePak IQ3 dash, Cerullo seats and a Detroit Speed seven-speed wiper system. An Air Ride Technologies digital control Ride Pro e2 gauge panel allows for suspension adjustments on the fly as the Vintage Air A/C system blows arctic temps throughout the cockpit. Jamming the perfect tunes for the autocross mood is a Kicker stereo system with a five-channel amplifier and eight speakers. Between the 614 HP roaring to life and the Kicker system punching through the cockpit, we bet there are a lot of "say what" occurrences. Keeping everything safe when triple digit speeds are reached is an Air Ride Technologies Tiger Cage bracing up the cockpit in the event

of a roll over. Kurt Blackgrove built a custom center dash panel, gauge panel and console top. Interior features from Marquez Design and Modo Innovations round out the high performance office. John Hochegsang spent hours at the CNC crafting the interior's one-off chiseled aluminum appointments. Rodney Mason constructed Air Ride's very first Tiger Cage, which was built for Velocity after completion to prove it could be installed in a completed car. Switches from Electric Life add modern technology to the classic performance picture.

The road race theme was carried from the inside out as the custom-mixed DuPont Hot Hues Velocity Orange is topped with bare metal stripes by Precision Coachworks. A few fresh factory replacement parts from Year One were also used to reassemble the car correctly.

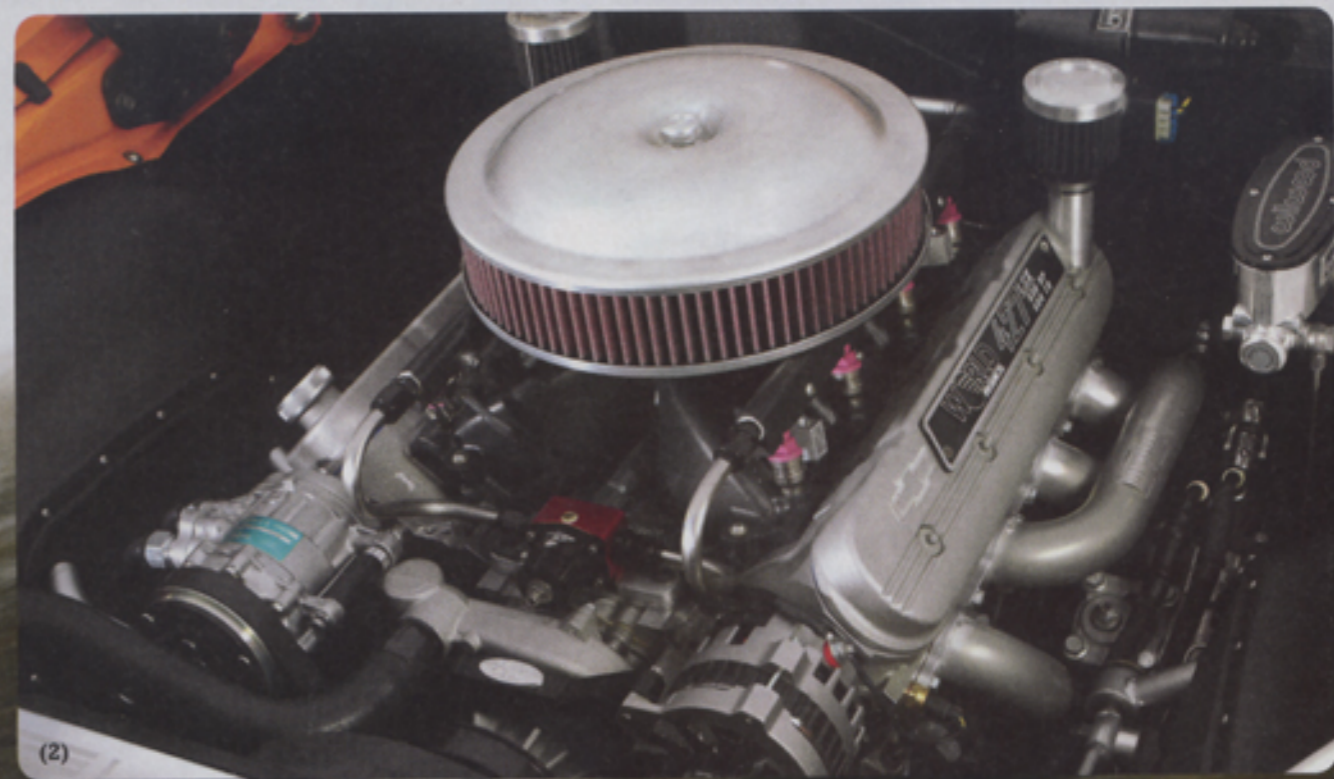
Perhaps the most striking feature on the car's surface is the custom-built and tuned lower front splitter that resembles a NASCAR lower valance. For a true race-inspired look custom-machined aluminum components were flowed through the

whole build. The crew at Precision Coachworks sucked the bumpers in tight to the body for a more chiseled physique.

In order to slot car it through the twisties of various autocross events and flog Velocity on the highway with just enough ground clearance, a complete Street Challenge air suspension package from Air Ride Technologies was bolted up underneath. The forward underpinnings attack corners with a pair of Strong Arm control arms, DA Shockwaves, a Musclebar, posi links, and billet tie rod adjusters. Out back the car is planted with an Air Bar system using DA Shockwaves. Air management is handled

**(1)** Like all the cars in the Air Ride fleet, Velocity is pushed to the limit. Bret believes in throttling his way to relaxation.

**(2)** A set of rear tires' worst enemy, the World Products 614-HP 427 LS provides endless hours of reliable track thrashing. An Afco aluminum radiator keeps it cool through all of the flat-footed action.



(2)



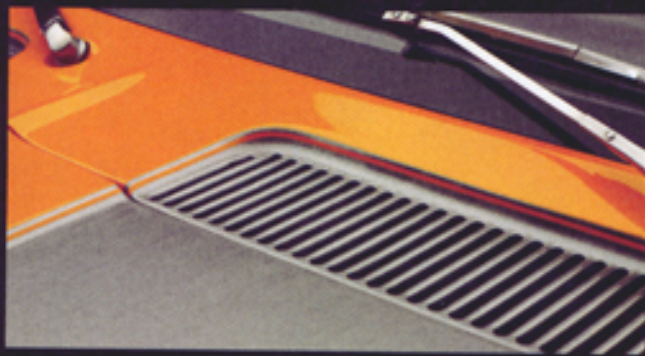
(1)



by a 4100 series Airpod system and LevelPro sensors.

Air Ride Technologies and Precision Coachworks have built one impressive first generation Camaro. Velocity is not just another pretty face; it can hang in virtually any performance situation. Here's to a hard running American muscle car. **E3**

**(3+4)** The interior has a race-inspired feel with Cerullo seats, a Tiger Cage roll cage, a RacePak 103 dash, and a Flaming River steering column topped with a Corsa steering wheel. A Twist Machine paddle shifter engages the Bowler box, while the 614-HP World Products mill shoves you in the seat and the Kicker audio system holds your ears prisoner.



(3)



(4)