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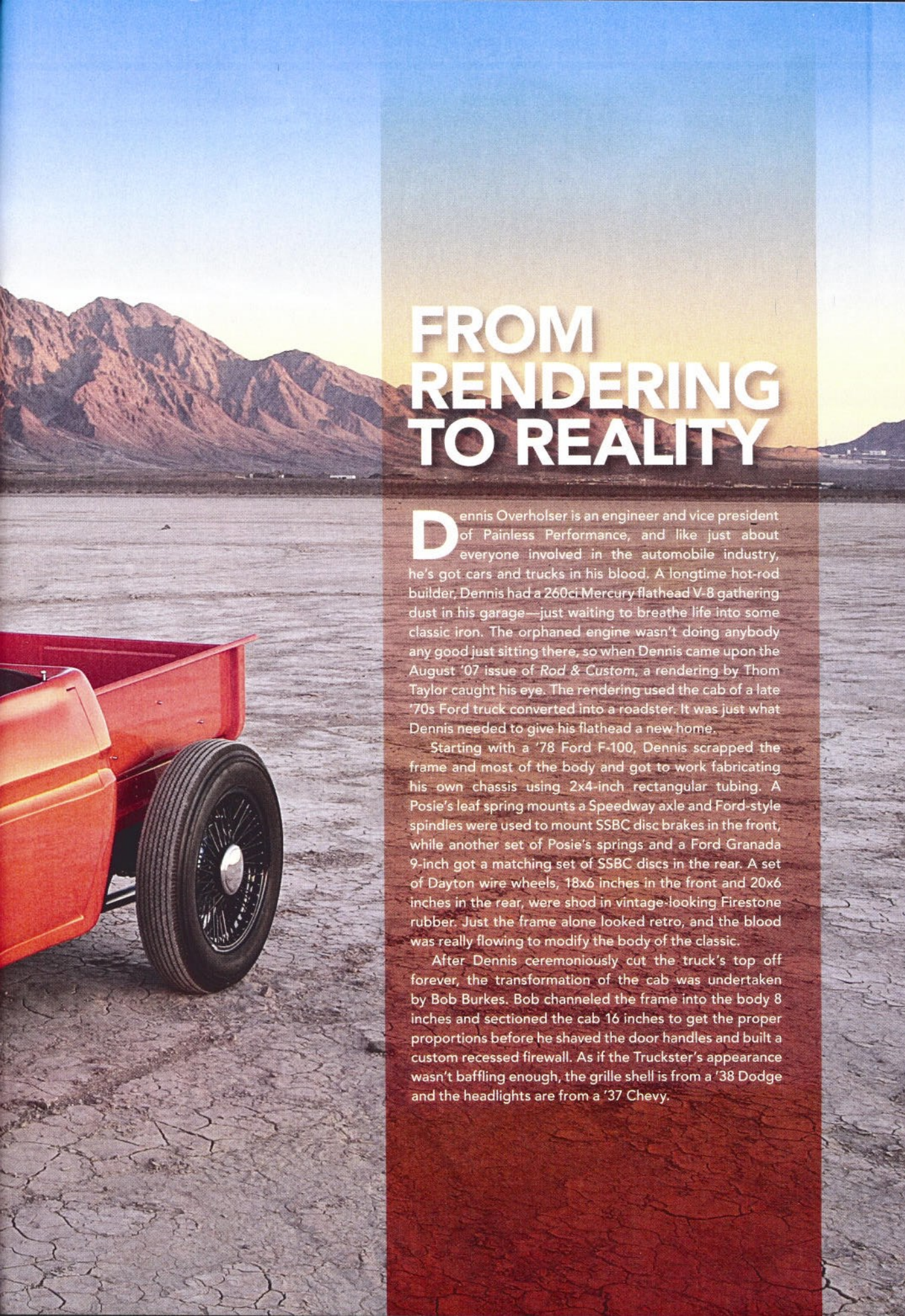


BY BRANDAN GILLOGLY ■ PHOTOGRAPHY: BRANDAN GILLOGLY

# TRUCKSTER







# FROM RENDERING TO REALITY

**D**ennis Overholser is an engineer and vice president of Painless Performance, and like just about everyone involved in the automobile industry, he's got cars and trucks in his blood. A longtime hot-rod builder, Dennis had a 260ci Mercury flathead V-8 gathering dust in his garage—just waiting to breathe life into some classic iron. The orphaned engine wasn't doing anybody any good just sitting there, so when Dennis came upon the August '07 issue of *Rod & Custom*, a rendering by Thom Taylor caught his eye. The rendering used the cab of a late '70s Ford truck converted into a roadster. It was just what Dennis needed to give his flathead a new home.

Starting with a '78 Ford F-100, Dennis scrapped the frame and most of the body and got to work fabricating his own chassis using 2x4-inch rectangular tubing. A Posie's leaf spring mounts a Speedway axle and Ford-style spindles were used to mount SSBC disc brakes in the front, while another set of Posie's springs and a Ford Granada 9-inch got a matching set of SSBC discs in the rear. A set of Dayton wire wheels, 18x6 inches in the front and 20x6 inches in the rear, were shod in vintage-looking Firestone rubber. Just the frame alone looked retro, and the blood was really flowing to modify the body of the classic.

After Dennis ceremoniously cut the truck's top off forever, the transformation of the cab was undertaken by Bob Burkes. Bob channeled the frame into the body 8 inches and sectioned the cab 16 inches to get the proper proportions before he shaved the door handles and built a custom recessed firewall. As if the Truckster's appearance wasn't baffling enough, the grille shell is from a '38 Dodge and the headlights are from a '37 Chevy.



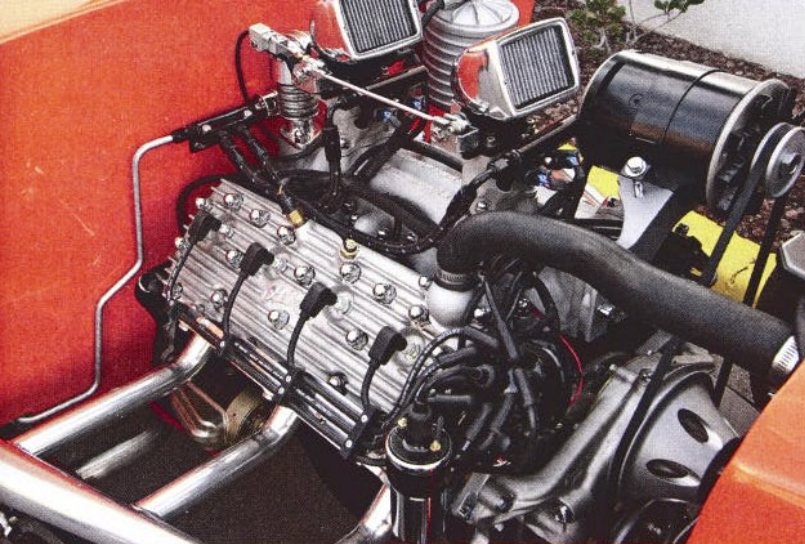


FLAMING RIVER STEERING COMPONENTS WERE CAPPED WITH A GRANT STEERING WHEEL. OF COURSE ALL WIRING IS VIA PAINLESS PERFORMANCE.

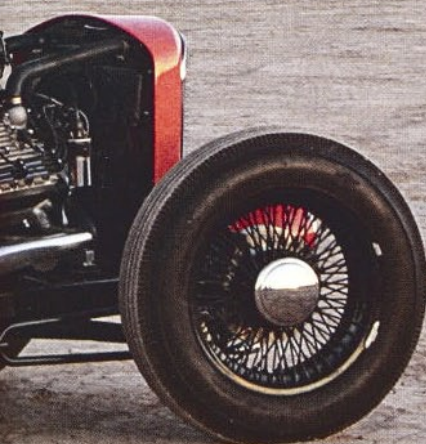
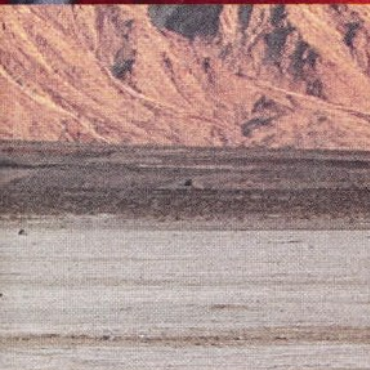
ALFRED E. NEUMAN GRINS BACK WITHOUT A CARE IN THE WORLD FROM ATOP A LOKAR SHIFTER.







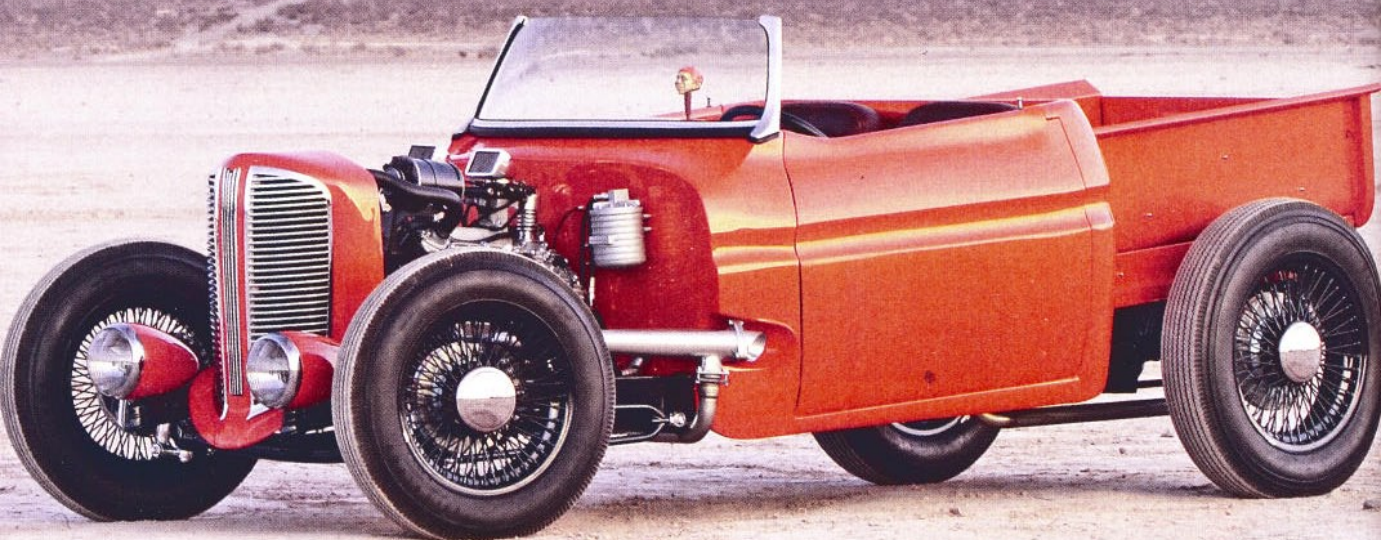
Despite the curveball the bodywork presents, there's no mistaking the flathead Ford mounted between the framrails, although it has a few tricks of its own. Mike Smith Machine Shop in Fort Worth, Texas, prepped the block, and Jeff Abbott completed the assembly on the 1952 block. Custom adapters were used to mount a Chevy 409 water pump, but that's not all. What looks at first glance to be dual Stromberg carbs is actually Painless Wiring's EFI system. Two F&B Performance throttle-bodies and four injectors keep the V-8 fed through an Offenhauser intake and Edelbrock heads. Sanderson headers that dip into coves in the cowl expel the exhaust. The engine is linked to a Ford C4 transmission built by Phoenix Transmissions and on to the 3.55-equipped rearend by a custom driveshaft from Inland Empire Driveshaft.







THOM TAYLOR RENDERING THAT  
INSPIRED DENNIS' BUILD



The inside of the roadster is simple, yet far from Spartan. You won't find any audio equipment—topless motoring and a spitting flathead would drown out all but the most thunderous of stereo systems anyway. Instead, Dennis relied on the quality craftsmanship of Eddie's Rods & Customs in Pueblo West, Colorado, where Eddie Potestio upholstered a set of custom seats in King Ranch leather from Bowen Foam and Fabric. The scarred and branded leather gives the seats a unique look that can't be matched with anything off the shelf. The gauge cluster in the center of the cab is also unique. It's a custom piece made by Classic Instruments, housed in a '37 Chevy headlight. Eddie, along with Bob Boudreaux, worked on capping the tops of the doors, the rear of the cab, and rolling the dash to finish the smooth look of the roadster.

With the extensive metalwork finished, Dennis left the task of painting the Truckster to Jimmy Bourdeaux at Perfection Auto Body in Fort Worth, where he sprayed the frame black and the body PPG Hot Wheels Orange. We tried our best to capture the tremendous glow from the orange paint. Trust us, it's nothing short of awe-inspiring. Stopping us dead in our tracks at first sight, we're sure you'll agree this may be the igniter for a whole new custom truck genre in the future.

Dennis had a lot of talented people lay hands on the Truckster, and he'd like to thank: Bob Boudreaux, John Roberts, Jimmy Boudreaux, Jerry Wallace, Eddie Potestio, Jason Hamner, Glenn Clark, Jeff Abbott, and Mike Abbott. **Truckin'**