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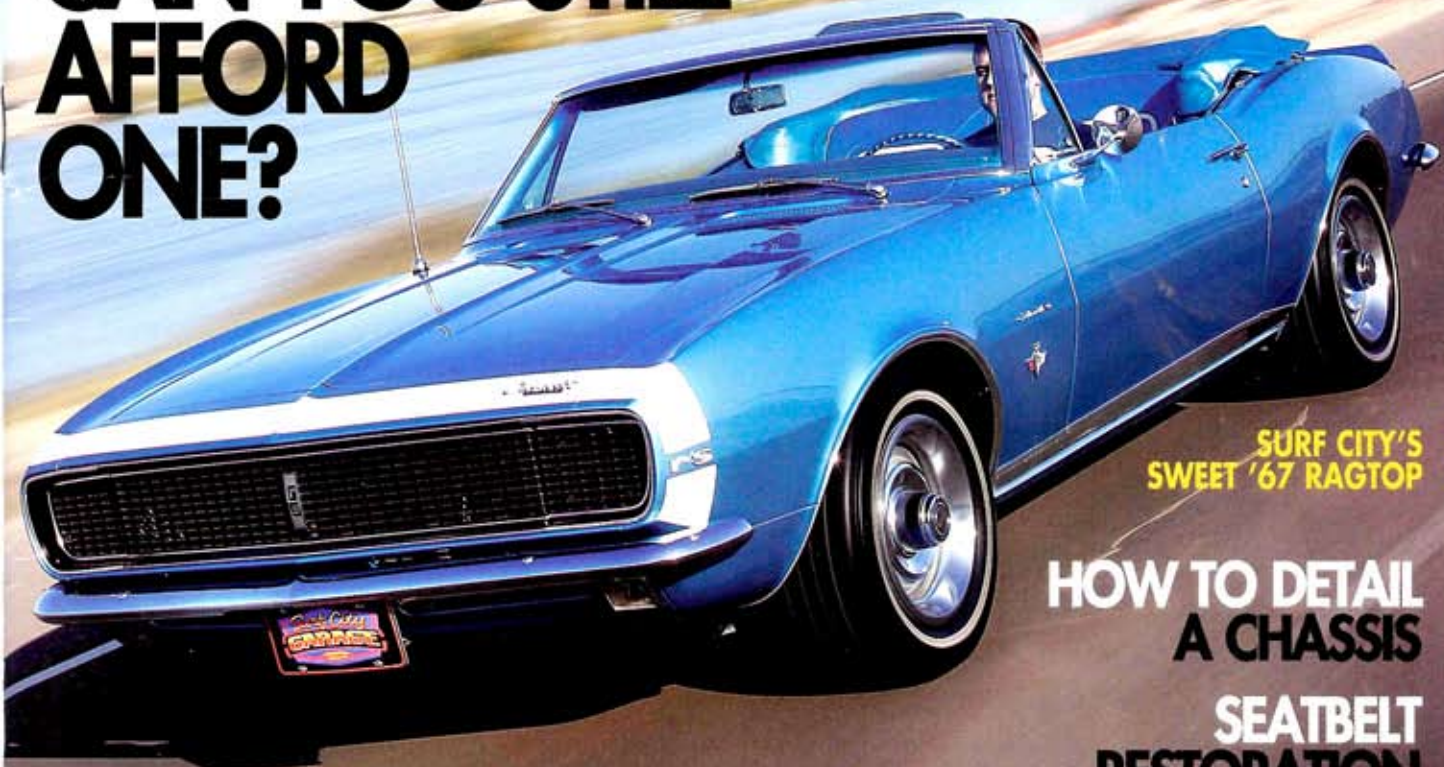
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NOVEMBER 2007



# L79

# BLASTING TIME

## Stripping a Nova Bare



By Arvid Svendsen

**A**llow me to explain my bias toward the '62-'67 Chevy II/Novas. In the late '60s, local car hero Stan from church drove a 283-powered '63 Chevy II two-door sedan with the callout "6" on the fender. That little Chevy quickly became my ultimate dream car. Whether it was the exhaust dumps stationed just ahead of the rear differential, or the Sun tach on the steering column, it soared above even the most impressive factory musclecars on the coolness scale.

Although his car originally sported the drab Adobe Beige paint, Stan repainted it something like Marina Blue. But it was the trend-setting silver paint in the rear cove that set this car apart from all other poseurs. The 13-inch stocker rims were tossed in favor of huge, 14-inch chrome reverse wheels and steamroller E78s all around. Stan solidified its status as my world's baddest hot rod by installing a high-compression 327 motor with a wild cam that didn't idle; it only popped randomly. That car started the whole Chevy II/Nova thing for me.

The next purchase for Stan was a '67 Marina Blue Nova SS daily driver. A couple of years of watching that car only height-

ened my Nova obsession. I've since had the opportunity to own both a '67 Nova and a '65 Nova SS, and speaking plainly, the '65 SS is my all-time favorite. However, this '66 Aztec Bronze L79 is enough to rethink my current "most-wanted Nova" ranking. What a blast—pun attempted—to see this car rescued from storage in order to be restored at Rt. 66 Motorsports.

Progress is being made on this not-quite-perfect Nova. Theo Jones at Imperial Blasting did a superb job blasting the car. When the Nova rolled out into daylight, it was found to be fairly solid, though it sported a bit more body filler than originally thought. As is always the case at Imperial Blasting, the car was clean and unscathed from the blasting process.

Developed by Owner Wally Olczak, Imperial Blasting's "proprietary blend" IB Mineral removes paint and rust without warping the sheetmetal. The material safely profiles the metal to accept primer and has 100-percent release; that is, it does not impregnate the steel like some other blasting media can. Check out the results for yourself and notice how the metal is cleaned up without damaging the surrounding areas.



At Rt. 66 Motorsports, the Nova was mounted on a rotisserie in order to simplify the blasting process. The body and rotisserie were rolled onto a trailer and transported to Imperial Blasting in South Holland, Illinois.



Here's how the car looked after blasting. The biggest surprise was the amount of body filler found on the flanks. Although relatively straight, the car's body has been worked quite extensively at some point in its life.



Possibly the biggest trouble spot on the car was at the cowl on the driver side, where it had been pushed in from a hit. Additionally, the rocker has rust that will need attention.



After blasting, the same area looked great in the framerail area and revealed minor pinhole rust in the driver-side floor pan and drain hole.



Before blasting, the body's floors and framerails looked fairly nice, with minimal rust. Cleaned up, the seams around the front framerails were especially nice. Although not pristine, the car clearly wasn't subjected to a lifetime of salt and grime.



Looking at the underside of the trunk floor revealed rust near the latch area. Rt. 66 Motorsports' Bill Jelinek's repair plan for this car is to retain as much original metal as possible, so he'll put a small patch in this area.



Trapped debris and moisture were certainly the culprits for the rust that affected this area where the front subassembly bolts to the cowl.



Blasting revealed the full extent of the damage. The repair must be accomplished while maintaining OE bracing and bolt-hole location.



The front subassembly sourced from California returned from the booth in excellent shape.



The bottom of the cowl on both sides was rusted through in this rust-prone area. Blasting made a very minimal change in the size of the hole, demonstrating the gentle impact that the IB Mineral has on the metal. Careful inspection will reveal how much metal has to be cut out and replaced.



Prior to blasting, the floor seemed quite solid, with little evidence of rust damage. Afterwards, obvious pinholes were found in the driver-side floor and drain hole, requiring future work.



The original passenger-side door showed minimal rust in the front-bottom corner, while the driver-side \$50 "swap-meet-find" door returned rust-free. Overall, the L79 looked fine, and now, it's ready to go under the knife. *MCR*

#### Sources

Imperial Blasting  
708/596-6420  
www.imperialblasting.com  
Rt. 66 Motorsports  
815/462-0090  
www.rt66motorsports.com