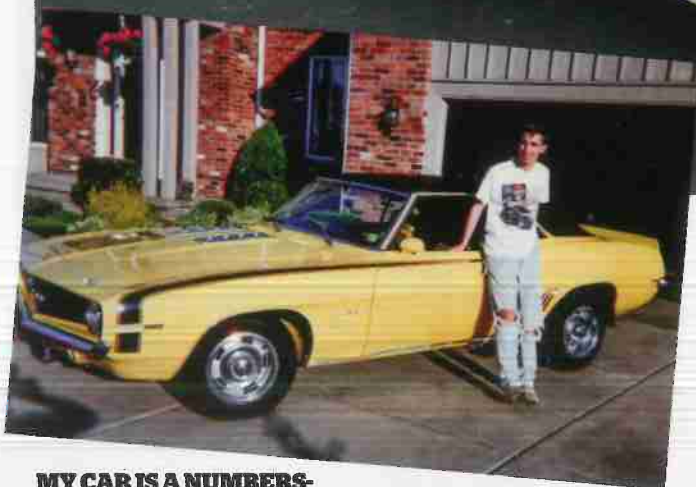


1969 Camaro



MY CAR IS A NUMBERS-matching 1969 Chevrolet Camaro SS396 with the L35, 325hp engine and Turbo 400 transmission. The car was assembled in the third week of October 1969 at the Norwood, Ohio, plant. The engine is actually 402 ci, as it was a late build. The Camaro has the yellow houndstooth Custom Deluxe interior with Style Trim Group, which complements the Daytona Yellow exterior and Rally sport wheels.

The car's ownership history is foggy, with previous owners in Watertown and Syracuse, New York, but no early documents available. The Camaro previously spent time as a drag car with high stall torque converter, jack-up shocks, ladder bars, a twisted body, and rubber all over the rear quarters.

My car came to me a week before graduating college (the old photo is the day I bought it

in June 1997) when I saw it on a street corner for sale. With exams and final projects due, I had no time to even look at it. But a week after graduation with an engineering degree (but no job yet), I went back and it was still there. It needed minor work, but it was pretty solid, and numbers-matching big-blocks are not on every street corner. Using the last of my funds and a

gift from my grandmother, the car became mine.

Over years of living in different places, I always took my car with me, and it was always in a garage. I kept working on small projects one at a time: engine, rear suspension, front suspension, interior, brakes, and so on. Once it was good enough I started attending cruise nights and local shows. Life slowed things down with a house, and then marriage, then another house, and another Camaro. But in time I had all the tools, the space, the workshop, and I was ready.

I started disassembling the car in October 2014, and a few months later delivered a rolling shell to my shop of choice, Riter Restoration. The car was media

blasted down to bare metal, and all sorts of interesting old body repairs came to light. But the body was strong overall with only a new trunk, some new quarters, and some fender patches needed.

The car was ready for paint in the summer of 2016, with the rolling shell done in November 2016. All the while, I had a basement full of parts to deal with. I media blasted and powdercoated numerous parts, carefully rebuilding and restoring every part I could while only replacing those items that had to go. That process alone was a good 18 months. Once the rolling shell was complete, the vinyl top and headliner were installed, and then the car was returned to my garage. Full reassembly started.

The car was up and ready to fire by April 2017, just in time to meet a deadline to attend a Brock Yates memorial event. By June, most items were fully complete, and the car started making appearances. I have turned every nut and bolt on this car and worked on every last part. I am proud of the final results. Now it's been more than 20 years of my car and I together, with many more still to go.

