

Three of a Kind

By Bob Schmeichel

Betting is not in my nature, but I do think the odds of one guy having three cars all the same brand, all the same model, and all the same year, at the same time, has got to be pretty slim to say the least. When I asked Dan Brady why he had three 1967 Camaros, his story began to unfold even though he had, and has, other desirable cars along the way to this point in his life, the 1967 Camaros stuck.

Both Dan and his brother, Scott, grew up learning and working in their dad's gas station in Wakonda, S.D., in the 60s and 70s. The knowledge they gained from doing the basic skills of auto mechanics has served them well all their lives. The cars from that timeframe were all similar under the hood mechanically; some just had more horsepower than others. When it came to outward appearance impressions made with cars, Dan said his uncle, Bob Lucas, was the biggest influence with him stopping by the station, or getting together for family reunions and arriving in some sort of muscle car. Dan said he had seen every kind of muscle car there ever was during those earlier years because of Uncle Bob, but the image of a 1967 Chevy Camaro stuck like a nail driven into a board – no pun intended since Dan builds wooden trusses for a living now.

Dan emerged into his adult life by doing body work, which held his interest from 1977 to 1985. He and his wife, Kim, got married in October 1981, kind of in the middle of his body work career. Anyone who has done this type of work for a living knows it is hard, along with the pay checks going up and down kind of making it a struggle. Dan bought his first '67 Camaro in 1983. It was a six-cylinder with a 4-speed car built that way from the factory. Dan drove the car for a couple years then decided to tear into it and build a pro street car that he could occasionally race. Unfortunately with times being tuff throughout the country, Dan changed occupations to have a steadier paycheck and improve their lifestyle and chances at dreams. As time went by, priorities changed with a failed business venture and kids coming into the picture making the first Camaro sit on the sidelines 'til later in life.

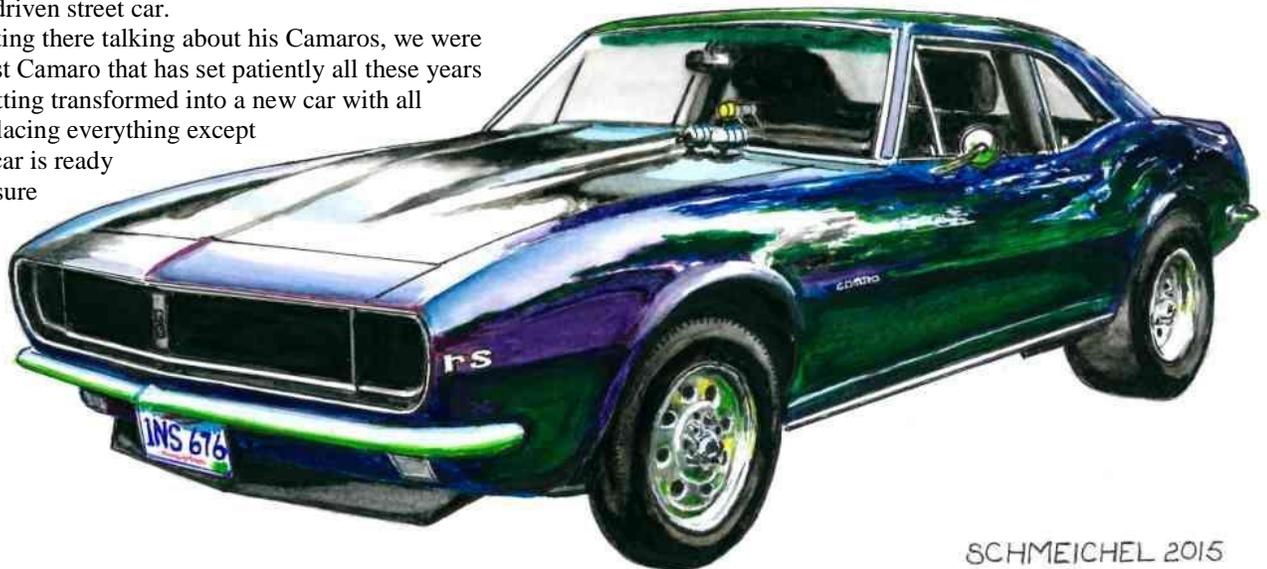
Dan bought his second '67 Camaro in 1991 out of a Mitchell for-sale ad. The car had been a drag race car out of Idaho from 1971 to 1991 with 52,000 actual miles on it. Dan said his original intension was to just make the car a good driver, but as anyone knows, you kind of become your own worst enemy with raising your standard with everything and forgetting about stopping. It has been over 20 years since Pat Folken painted this second Camaro its present purple color, and Dan redid the whole interior himself. Over those years, Dan put together a fairly stout carbureted 406 small block Chevy that resides in this second Camaro right now. Behind that is a 350 turbo trans with a trans brake, 3800 stall converter, and 4.11 rear end gears to make it go fast. Last summer he installed adjustable coil-over shocks on the front to lower the car 2 inches, installed disc brakes on the rear along with a new traction bar set-up and new wheels all around making it a new car again. He said the additions he did to the car not only helped it ride 10 times better but enabled the car to launch harder pulling the front tires instead of spinning the rears gaining one tenth of a second running 11.20 at 123 mph. This second car continues to be not only a daily or weekend driver but is enjoyed now more than ever for what it really has evolved into.

Dan's third '67 Camaro was bought from a buddy who had lost interest in the car after he hurt the engine turbo-charging it. The owner didn't want to put any more money into the car, so Dan was offered this true pro-streeted car for much less than he could build it. Nice orange paint with full tube chassis and suspension, a full certified cage, tubbed with monster tires. Recognizing the value, along with being what Dan was always trying to build too, he bought it. It took awhile, but Dan had the engine apart and brought everything back to where it needed to be. The irony of this third Camaro is that it has the same drive train as his purple second Camaro and doesn't run too much faster until he turns on the nitrous. The orange pro-street car then runs a 9.86 et at 135 mph...very respectful for an occasionally driven street car.

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As we were sitting there talking about his Camaros, we were looking at Dan's first Camaro that has set patiently all these years since 1985 while getting transformed into a new car with all new sheet metal replacing everything except the roof. While the car is ready

to paint, Dan is not sure of the direction yet, possibly bringing it into the 21st century with drive train updates, but that is another story yet to happen.



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