

DEUT CHAR R/T

DODGE'S stalwart two-door Sports Hardtop, the Charger, was reincarnated for a third time in the 1971 model year. The Division had succeeded in expanding the Charger's performance reputation from its humble beginnings as a fastback Coronet way back in 1966. The classic American 'coke bottle'-look, first seen in 1968, was reworked.

The stylists came up with a long hood, short deck sports saloon, that rode on a 115-inch wheel base, a kind of stretched E-Body with a Challenger shape. A new roofline, vent-less glass, and swoopy 'aero' designed lines would carry the Charger forward for another three years, with only minor facelifts necessary to distinguish age related models.

The new B-Body came in five versions: Charger (Coupe or Hardtop), Charger 500, S.E., Charger Super Bee and at the top of the tree, the Charger R/T. Engine availability was limited to three Chrysler R.B. (Raised Block) mills: 440cu.in. Magnum 370bhp, 440cu.in. with three dual-carbs (six pack), rated at 385bhp and of course the 426cu.in. Hemi, rated at an awesome 425bhp.

To meet the ever stricter emission laws, engine ratings were down 5bhp across the performance spectrum from the previous year, with the exception of the Hemi. Nonetheless, the Hemi was re-cammed, and the compression ratio dropped to 10.25:1. Also, a manual choke replaced the electrical unit, yet still its advertised horsepower remained the same.

Our feature car, a 1971 Hemi Charger R/T has something of an interesting history. It was originally ordered through the PX (Post



SCH GER

Talk about Transcontinental track burner! This Charger has strutted its stuff all over Europe, the US and at one stage was even split between the two continents. What? How?! DR OKSIEN explains...

PHOTOGRAPHY **ANDERS ODEHOLM**



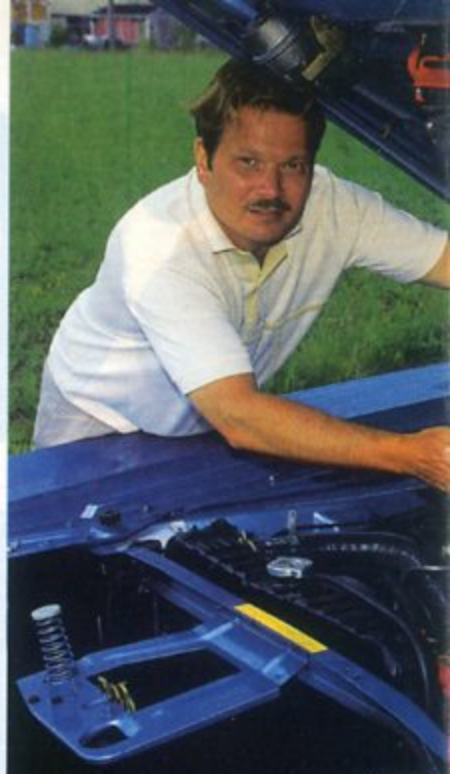
performance
SPECIAL

DEUTSCH CHARGER R/T



performance
SPECIAL

“ALL IN ALL, THIS THOROUGHbred HEMI CHARGER HAS NOT ONLY SEEN ACTION IN EUROPE, BUT BEEN A DAILY DRIVER IN IT'S HOME COUNTRY AND IS NOW FINALLY ENJOYING A PAMPERED LIFE”

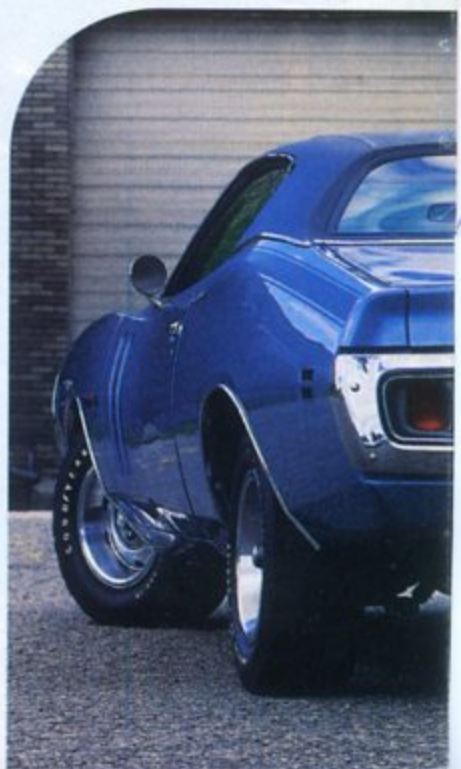


PRODUCTION OF '71 HEMI CHARGER R/T

71 CHARGER R/T AUTO	33
FOUR-SPEED MANUAL	30
INTERNATIONAL ORDER, 4 SPEED MANUAL	1
TOTAL 71 R/T HEMI CHARGER PRODUCTION	64

VIN DECODE OF HIX'S '71 HEMI CHARGER R/T

WS23RIA121756	
WS	CHARGER SPECIAL
23	TWO-DOOR HARDTOP
R	426CU.IN. HEMI
I	1971 MODEL YEAR
A	LYNCH ROAD, MI USA
121756	FACTORY SEQUENCE NUMBER



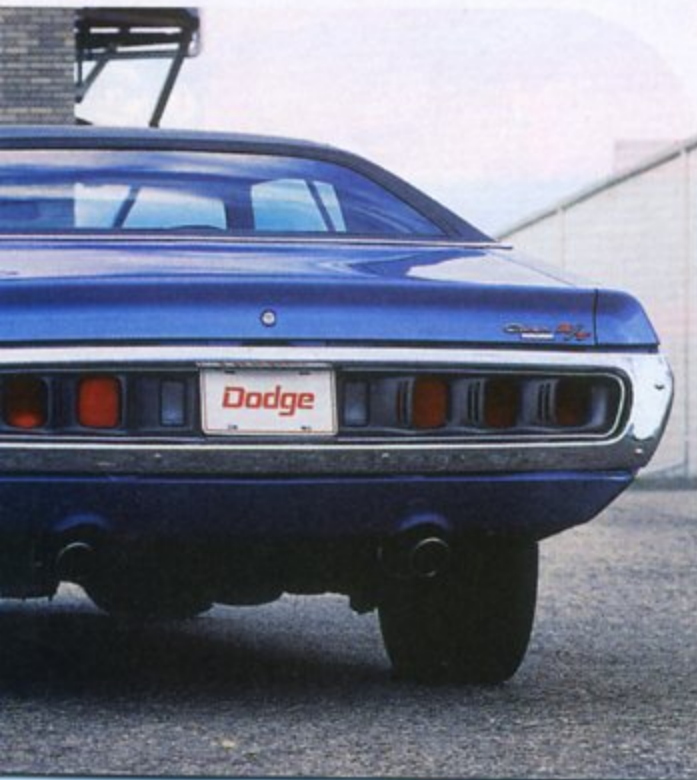


ABOVE: HIX GETS HIS KICKS BACK IN THE SEVENTIES WITH THE CHARGER
LEFT: AIR-CLEANER SPELLS IT OUT



ABOVE: A SIGHT FIT TO LEAVE MOST MOPAR FANS QUAKING IN THEIR BOOTS!

FAR LEFT: THE CHARGER OOZES SEVENTIES APPEAL: JACK KNIFE SHIFTER, BLACK HOOD STRIPE AND ACTIVE HOOD SCOOP



Exchange Store; like our NAAFI, but with obviously far more exotic goods!) where American Servicemen could purchase the car of their dreams, with the money saved during their tours of duty.

Staff Sergeant Delton Hix, on a tour of Germany with the 173rd Army Airborne, was the lucky recipient. Besotted

with Drag racing, Hix wanted a car that would trounce anything daring to challenge him on the Autobahns. Not only that, he also wanted an unbeatable package that could cope with anything in its class on Europe's newly emerging drag strips.

The GB5 Bright Blue Metallic Hemi Charger R/T he ordered left a Canadian Dodge dealer en route to Bremen, Germany, and then into the expectant hands of Mr Hix. The Charger was equipped with a four-speed manual transmission, but Hix changed it to an auto, as he knew that a missed shift could cost him megabucks if the engine blew. He also swapped in a set of 3.54:1 gears, replacing the 4.10:1's originally fitted to the Dana 60 axle.

The car cost \$4,546 and its owner promptly drag raced it all over Europe, gaining records in Germany, Sweden, Belgium and Switzerland running in the D-stock /automatic class. The Charger's fender tag shows an 'I', indicating International order status, together with a special decal informing the owner of it's Dodge division pedigree.

The big 4200lb. Dodge turned consistent mid-11s on stock rims and bias-ply tyres. As his winning reputation spread, Hix obtained permission to airlift the Hemi by helicopter to and from race meetings!

However, all good things must come to an end (so they say), and in 1974 Hix and his Hemi returned home to North Carolina. He found America a very different country to the one he left a few years previously.

Performance was now a dirty word, as the oil crisis had taken hold and a Hemi Charger with a fuel consumption rate of less than 10mpg wasn't very well received. So, Hix pulled the motor, and sent it to a close friend in Sweden, who raced a very competitive Anglia.

A 440 cu.in. replaced the Hemi for a while and then a further down-loading saw a 360cu.in. two-barrel motor between the fenders. Eventually, the car was sold in 1982 to a lady who then sold it on to owner number three, also in North Carolina.

This third owner never got around to restoring the car and in 1992 it was sold to the current owner avid motor collector 'Hemi' Harold Sullivan of Troy, Michigan. With it's unique history and rarity, the restoration went to Vance Cummings of Muscle Cars Unlimited. There it was treated to the full NOS (new old stock) treatment, and even the original 426cu.in. engine was tracked down, and brought back from Sweden, as well as the original 4.10:1 gears, which now reside in the Dana.

All in all, this thoroughbred Hemi Charger has not only seen track action in Europe, but been a daily driver in it's home country and is now finally enjoying a pampered life, in retirement as part of a Mopar collection. To think that a 'one-of-one' muscle car has survived, despite living on two continents, over a period of nearly 30 years, is testimony to its original owner, a little bit of luck, and the skills of one of America's finest Mopar restorers. ★

