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The Prez Sez

Wow! What a show at Hagerstown, MD last month. There were over 20 cars in attendance and the Chrisman Comets to boot. Not to mention our friend Bart's win in his class on the drag strip. Many thanks to Tom Church for his leadership in organizing the Comet East part of that show and to Pete Girard for his part in getting those historic drag cars there.

The show at Hendersonville, NC is happening as I write this. I sure hope those guys are having a great time. I wish I could be there. That will be the last official Comet East event for this year. As long as the weather holds I suspect Cometeers will be showing off their beautiful rides all over the place.

Editors Corner

We've got a lot to cover this issue. There are pictures from Hagerstown, a tech article, articles on drag racing history and lots more.

First, let me thank our contributors. Dick Harrington has given us several tech articles over the years. This time he submitted an article about adding 4-way flashers to a Comet. Bob Gajewski delves into his collection of drag racing memorabilia this month for some gems about Comets participating in those straight track races.

What have you got lying around that others may be interested in? Maybe you could copy a couple of photos from your album and show us a before and after of your car? Include a list of repairs or

Next year we will have several events including a really big deal in Dearborn, MI if everything works out well. I hope to have solid details by the first of the year.

While you're thinking about what upgrades you want to do on your car or where you want to take your Comet next year, think some about where the club should be going. What can the club do to make your experience better? I want to hear your ideas and wishes. How can we take Comet East to the next level?

There's lots to do. Lets . . .

Rock and Roll

Tom

modifications and you've got the basics of a great article.

The long and short of all this is I still need your help to put out a quality publication. Let me know what you need to help you kick your Comet up a notch. I need suggestions and ideas for articles. I need to know what you all want to read about.

Let me apologize for the lateness of this newsletter. I've been a sluggard and a slackard. Thanks for your patience.

Rock and Roll

Tom





Comet Tech

Adding 4-Way Flashers

By Dick Harrington

Why:

- Safety
- Cool
- Cheap.
- Relatively Easy.

Recommended Tools:

- Soldering gun
- Circuit tester



Parts Required:

- 1966-68 Mustang, Fairlane, F100 Flasher Switch & Bracket (available from Year One @ \$55.00)
- 1966-68 Mustang, Fairlane, F100 Wire Harness or
- 4 – 5' color coded 16 gage wire (substitute for wire harness)
- Heavy duty flasher
- Flasher connector (crimp on female spade connectors will work)
- Inline fuse holder with 20-amp fuse.
- Electrical tape
- Heat shrink tubing
- Misc. crimp on connectors

NOTE: Junk yards are your best source, eBay & swap meets are other sources



Instructions:

1. **Mount the Switch:** These switches were originally mounted in the upper left hand corner of the glove box. I find it easier to remove the glove box door and liner and install the switch on the workbench. With the glove box liner removed, it is also a little easier to route the wiring over to the steering column. Drill 2 holes in the top of glove box liner to fit the switch. The original bracket had a metal backing plate that was mounted on the top side of the glove box liner, 2 washers would accomplish the same thing if you don't have the backing plate.

2. Wiring:

- Place a female spade connector on each wire (4)
- Splice the flasher connector into the wire that will supply power to the switch.
- Splice an inline fuse holder in to the power supply wire.
- I used one red (or color of your choice) wire (power), 2 blue wires (each front direction) and a purple wire (rear brake lights).
- Splice one blue (or color of your choice) wire into each front directional light (White w/blue stripe & Green w/white stripe) where the turn signal switch wiring exits the steering column under the dashboard.
- Splice the purple (or color of your choice) wire into rear brake light (Green w/orange stripe) where the turn signal switch wiring exits the steering column under the dashboard.



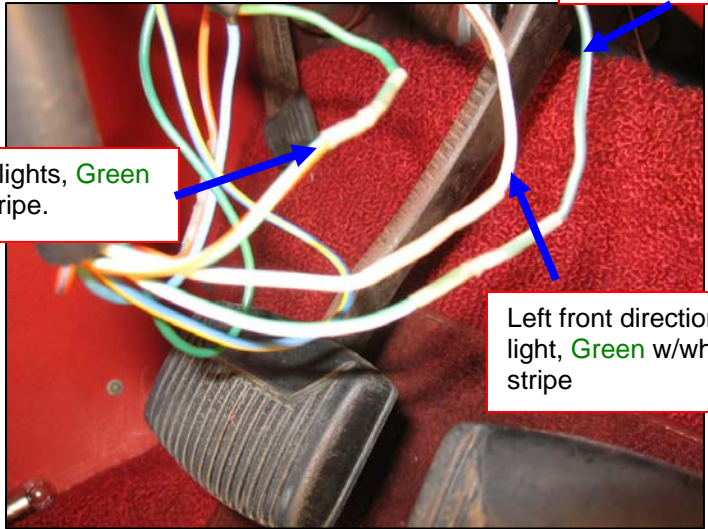


Comet Tech

Adding 4-Way Flashers - contd

- Splice the power supply into a power source that is always on.

Wiring Color Codes 1960-65:
 Right Front: White w/blue stripe
 Left Front: Green w/white stripe
 Right Rear: Orange w/blue stripe
 Left Rear: Green w/orange stripe



Right front directional light, White w/blue stripe.

Rear brake lights, Green w/orange stripe.

Left front directional light, Green w/white stripe

Editor's note: Thanks Dick for this informative article. Anything that makes our cars safer is a good thing.



There's never been a Comet like this before—more massive, more luxurious, full of wham and scam, the car that rewrote the record books at Daytona! And what a value—more than a compact by far, but still compact-priced. Come get our record-making deal today!

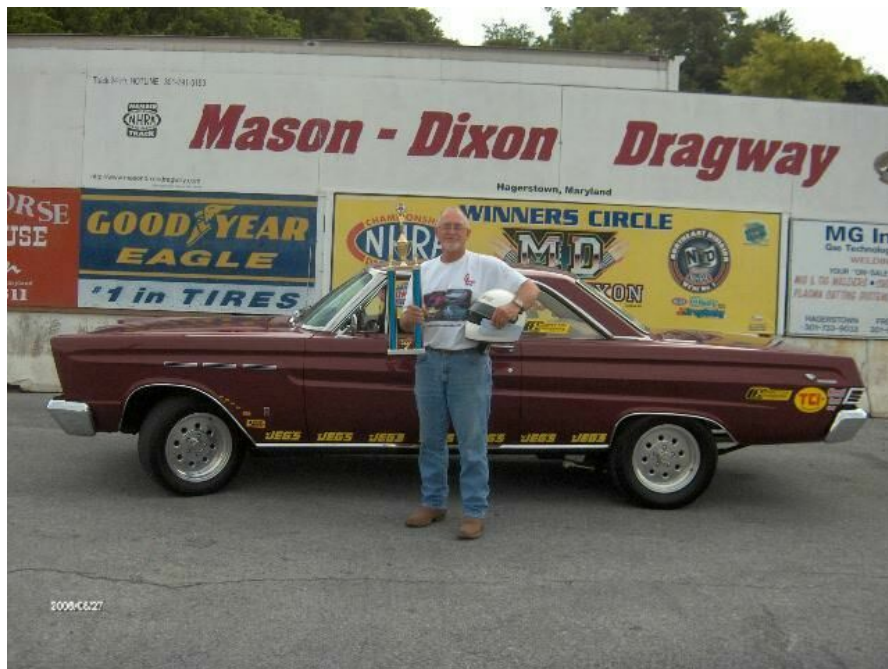
COMET PRICES START AS LOW AS

 \$2115*

The All-New 1964 Comet Caliente made its debut in this December 1964 ad appearing in the Detroit News. Note the base price of \$2,115.00 in the lower right hand corner of the ad. Today a comparable car would have another zero in the base price

Member's Rides

Bart Whatley's Class winning 65 Comet



In 1999 I purchased a car almost exactly like I had when I married my wife, Elaine, in 1966. I restored it the following year and enjoyed keeping it stock until the 289 motor gave out about 3 years ago. It was then that I started playing with it and reverted to my roots of stop light drag racing. I have taken care not to cut or drill the stock body. It has been a learning experience how to make power and get it to the ground. It was worth it all at the Mason-Dixon Drag Strip. The last time I bracket raced was in 1980. I am so pleased and humbled that I was able to win the Street Class in honor of Tim. I wish he could have been here, yet it is evident that his spirit lives on. Rock 'N' Roll Comets!

Equipment

Motor: Ford Racing 5.0 crate motor; 345 hp and approx. 500 with supercharger; GT40X aluminum heads; B303 roller cam

Ignition: MSD 6 BTM with boost reference; MSD distributor; MSD Blaster SS coil; Jegg's HP 8.0mm silicone spark plug wires; Battery re-located to trunk.

Induction: Custom fabricated cold air intake with K&N filter; Paxton Novi 1200 supercharger; Holly HP750 double-pumper; Edelbrock performer RPM aluminum intake

Exhaust: Heddman 1 5/8" long tube headers with 3" collectors; 2 1/2" dual exhaust pipes with exhaust dumps; Flowmaster 40 mufflers; 3" stainless tips

Fuel system: Aermotive HP, 20psi electric fuel pump; Aermotive boost indicated by-pass regulator; System 1 and BG fuel filters, front and back; 1/2" stainless braided fuel line; 3/8" steel return line; Stock gas tank with Jegg's sump

Suspension: OEM springs, front and back; Competition Engineering 80/20 front shocks, OEM rear; Competition Engineering, Slide-A-Link traction bars; Crites frame connectors, welded

Drive train: TCI Street Fighter C4 trans.; TCI 3000 anti-balloon stall converter; 9" rear housing with stock tubes; 9", 3.50 traction-lock third member; stock axles; Clinnert 3" drive shaft; Summit drive shaft safety loop

Cooling: Jegg's aluminum radiator; B&M 24000GVW trans cooler; Perma-Cool 2100 CFM 16" electric fan

Wheels: 7x15 Vintage aluminum wheels 235/60R15 Mickey Thompson ET Street Radial tires; disk front brakes and OEM drum in rear

Inside: Hurst V-Matic 2 shifter with lockouts; Auto Meter gauges, tach and shift light; Pioneer radio and CD player Stock seats, door panels, etc.

Performance:

Last run
Dial-in: 12.29
R/T .041
60 1.824
1/8 7.873
1/4 12.384
MPH 108.12

Next to last run
Dial-in: 12.25
R/T .066
60 1.802
1/8 7.858
1/4 12.382
MPH 107.96

At the Hotel



Sunday's Showfield



Jack Chrisman's Comets



Saturday Night Cruise - In





kunz's comet: "Return of the Flying Farmer"

By Bob Gajewski

From out of a small thundering herd of only six known to exist from the Mercury stables, we now reveal with great pride Arnie "The Farmer" Beswick's 1965 A/FX Comet Cyclone. This car now resides in Michigan and is owned by a good friend Dave Kunz. What a marriage: A super car and super guy. But without any further ado, let us continue on with the saga of one of the rarest Mercury mastodons ever to devour 1,320 feet of asphalt.

Unlike the infamous 427 Fairlane Thunderbolts, the A/FX Comets did not enjoy a propagation of the species. The Comets were not mass-produced by Dearborn Steel Tubing or Kar Kraft. These A/FX Comets were factory bred and born. For those of us who have been denied an existence prior to 1950, the "A" designates a 427 motor and the "FX" designates "factory experimental." Hence the name "A/FX Comet". Now back to the "Flyin' Farmer," a.k.a. Kunz's Comet. Dave acquired the Beswick Comet in 1984. The Comet first resurfaced publicly in a 1984 edition of "Super Ford." Here it appeared in Minnesota, sporting white paint and a blue stripe. The former Beswick Comet contained the famous 427 medium riser fuel injected lunger, 4-speed top loader gearbox and 9-inch 3l-spline locker. All this was encased in the factory fiberglass and sheet metal skin.



According to Dave, Arnie "Farmer" Beswick piloted the A/FX at the Winternationals in Pomona. The farmer also scorched the old U.S. 19 strip in Albany, Georgia with a blistering 1/4 mile 10.88 E.T.

In May of 1965, Arnie parted ways with the FX'er, perhaps to try his luck with his second string GTOs. The Comet then fell into the hands of Paul Rossi. Rossi substituted the 427 with the famous SOHC 427 Hemi dual quad mastodon motor. Rossi pioneered the Cyclone sporting new gold metal flake wrappings and appropriately names the Comet "Goldfender". Paul had acquired the car out of Morrison, Illinois. He match raced the car at the now defunct Motor City Dragway, at Detroit Dragway and in Canada during the summer of 1965. Paul then sold the car in 1966. Ford got the car back and farmed it over to one Roy Stefi, who extracted the SOHC cammer. At this point, the Comet became a "dollar" car drifting over [to] White Plains, N.Y. The Farmer car then found its way to Canada and into the

hands of Jim Melsten who flogged the Comet with its gold-metal-flake trim in various match races. A 427 medium riser wedge was once more cradled between the gold fenders. After this, the former white Cyclone, now gold, was repainted to blue, then [later] re-dyed to red. The years melted away and the Beswick Comet became lost in obscurity, changing owners and hiding its true identity under many layers of paint.

Enter David Kunz. Dave set out to capture an original A/FX Cyclone. Little did he know that his Comet safari would lead him to Canada, where he would discover the famous Beswick beast. When purchased, the Comet was wearing a coat of red paint. However, she had weathered the passing of 20 years remarkably well and the fiberglass front bumper, steel rear bumper, fiberglass fenders, ram air hood, fiberglass doors and deck lid were all intact and in place as was the prized Ford Motor Co. warranty "disclaimer" tag; still affixed to the door. With his prize safely nestled in his garage, Dave immediately undertook-the most important task first. He performed a "chain fall" tune up and commenced dismantling the tired 427 powerpack. During the course of disemboweling the engine, Dave discovered the motor had been assembled incorrectly, cam bearings improperly installed, very poor oil circulation and a multitude of other sins.



Rumor has it that the machine shop, who specialized in Chevy engines, did the "blacksmith job" on the Comet motor. No wonder those Chevys collected so few time slips! Leaving nothing to be overlooked, Dave had the engine honed true with a torque plate, installed a flat tappet cam, beefed rockers, a forged Lemans crank, rods and internals. Mixing it up at the rear, Dave installed a 35-spline spool. With the mighty 427 now properly buttoned up, Dave topped it off with a Calumet-Jackson injector setup. This allows the "27" to gorge itself on gas, alcohol or nitro. The Comet also sports the same traction system. That is, the same factory installed traction bars that the Beswick car launched with.

Originally, a 3-point cage overshadowed the driver. This is now replaced with a 6-point cage. A standard Ford dual point distributor still adequately



handles feeding spark to all 8 lungs. Dave adds that the Cyclone ran quicker with the 427 than it did with the SOHC cammer. The 2-1/4" headers handle the job of purging spent gases well. Transmitting the 427's power to the rear wheels is your basic tried and true 4-speed top loader. A beefed Mark Williams prop shaft with a heavy duty slip yoke and pinion yoke turn the 9" PRO gear securing the 15"x11.5" rear tires are 5/8 wheel studs.

The Comet also sports the original 5-spoke Cragar mag wheels that came standard. The same Logghe Brothers wheelie bars that Paul Rossi ran with still separate the rear bumper from the asphalt, and the original leaf springs still cradle the rear end. A tubular type front axle holds the front tires.

Dave runs 11-1/2 inch Goodyear's on the Comet. Originally, 15"x10" tires were standard on the FX. Big meats for 1965 standards! Somewhere between Beswick and Kunz, the Comet got a slightly shortened wheelbase for weight transfer. Dave still retains a set of original magnesium Halibrand rims.

The A/FX Cyclones came without rear seats and only two front bucket seats. The instrument panel from the cluster on was a fiberglass panel with a block-off plate for the heater. A very spartan interior adorned the cockpit. Interior decorations included red carpet and door panels, sans window cranks (B/FX Comets had window cranks). The A/FX utilized weight saving plexiglass for the side glass and backlight. The interior is Rangoon Red. In fact, that was the ONLY color. The ominous fiberglass hood sucked in fresh air through twin snouts feeding a direct ram air system - simple but effective. Dave chose to retain all the previous owner's handiwork such as the Beswick white paint scheme, Rossi's parachute, reworked steering gear, relocated front axle, and Logghe wheelie bars. In order to preserve Mercury's drag racing history from 1965, Dave has wisely chosen to duplicate the Beswick car exactly as she ran in early 1965.

Dave, not one to farm anything out, picked up his air gun and blew the fresh white paint job on the Comet. Then, armed with photos of the Cyclone from '65, he loaded the white Cyclone on a trailer and trucked on over to George Garner. Now George does with a paint brush what Van Gogh did with canvas -creates a masterpiece. George duplicated the exact lettering that appeared on the Comet when Beswick flew it in 1965. George even duplicated the misspelling of Jardine headers to "Jardene" to preserve automotive drag racing history. All this was accomplished off of old magazine photos. Dave obtained an injector setup that actually came off of a Lemans GT-40. Dave, of course, replaced all injector lines himself.

According to Dave, only six 1965 A/fX Comet Cyclones were built. One factory backup was sold to Moyer's Dealership in Maryland. The six A/fX Comets were piloted by: Arnie Beswick, Hayden Proffitt, "Fast" Eddie Shartman, "Dyno" Don Nicholson, George Delorean, and Ramazinski. Dave says all six Comets exist today.

By now I'm sure most of those readers who are experts of A/FX Comets are probably saying: "You missed #7. What about Chrisman's Comet? Chrisman's Comet is a story in itself, but just for general info, here's an abbreviated story on Jack's Comet. The 1965 Chrisman Comet was not a factory '65 A/FX. This car was actually a '64 Cyclone that was a totally re-skinned car using a '65 front clip and quarters to produce a '65 Comet. This car ran a Sox & Sons blower perched atop a SOHC cammer engine;



Dave Kunz's A/FX Comet

hence, this was not a factory '65 A/FX car. From time to time, campfire stories tell about other long lost A/FX Comets resurfacing. Again, there were only SIX of these factory freight trains built. Four of these contained the SOHC 427; the remaining two had the 427 medium riser engine.

Those of us who are fortunate enough to own a '65 Comet can be proud of its heritage and history. You can imagine Dave's feelings when he pulls his trailer onto the road, knowing that he is pulling along the actual car that wrote the Mercury history book.

Editor's note: This article originally appeared in a 1988 issue of the Performance Ford Club of America magazine. It has been edited by the author and is used here with his permission. Comet East wishes to express our gratitude to Bob for supplying us with this insight into a piece of Comet racing history.



Top Row: Terry Lyda, 64 Cyclone; Mike & Jill Ponder, 65 Caliente; Leon Black 64, Cyclone
2nd Row: Dewey Lyda, 61 4-dr; William Lyda, 65 Cyclone; Ray and Melody Wells, 65 Caliente
Right: White 65 Caliente, Owner unknown
Below left: Founder Tim Morley's 65 202; *Courtesy of his mom, Treasurer Selma Feifer*
Below Right: Attendees gather for a relaxing evening and picnic after the show. *Man, I wish I could have gone. ed*





Moving?

Remember to let the club secretary know if you change your address, phone number or email address. Also let us know if you get an email address. You may write the secretary at the address on the front page. You may also phone or email. Letters, postcards and email are best, but the answering machine is (almost) always on.

ed.



Contact the club secretary to purchase the following items:

Color print T-shirts available in M, L, XL **\$18 + s&h**

Pen & Ink Drawing T-shirt available in L, XL, XXL (This is a licensed reprint of the drawing by Ian Jones) **\$15 + s&h**

Dash Plaques **\$1ea or 2/\$1.50** (from the 2005 Comet East Annual Meeting and show in Bowling Green, KY)

We have these items here. For other club gear visit the website or call the secretary to find out how to order. These and other Club SWAG will be available at club events while supplies last



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