

# **1950 Studebaker Custom**

**Built by Trevor Halstead  
Custom and Classic Restorations  
Hamilton, New Zealand**

This 1950 Studebaker Champion Sedan started life as a left-hand steer, six cylinder American import and has been custom built by Trev Halstead of Custom & Classic Restorations for clients Ron and Lorraine Child of Whangamata, New Zealand, home of the annual Beach Hop Rock and Roll Festival. The five-day festival includes a car show that attracts over 1,200 classic cars and upwards of 100,000 people.

## **BODY**

The roof has been chopped three inches and roof gutters shaved. The fronts of the front guards were seam-welded and radiused with the side vents removed. All chrome has been removed from the car except for the iconic bullet nose. The door handles and trunk handle have been shaved and electric door openers fitted. Stock style 1951 Champion taillights have been fitted. The petrol filler is accessed from behind the hinged taillight housing. The bumpers have been removed with custom sheet metal fabricated for the rear panel. A smooth firewall was fabricated. The hood was stretched over the eyebrow openings which have been filled in the front grille panel. A raised drive shaft tunnel was fabricated to cover the drive shaft.

## **PAINT**

The entire car was media blasted back to bare metal. Priming was undertaken with DuPont 2K, followed by a color coat of gloss Purple DuPont Centari 2K on all the interior trunk and engine bay surfaces. The chassis parts with fittings were done in silver 2K. The exterior was painted in DuPont Lucite 400 acrylic lacquer with a 12.5% satin finish.

## **MOTOR AND RUNNING GEAR**

The completely rebuilt motor is a 1963 Studebaker 259 V8 with a .060 inch overbore and a remote full flow oil filter mounted on the chassis. The motor has a 9:1 compression ratio running a R1 camshaft. Custom headers lead to hidden lake pipes running under the car. The heads and block plus all other castings have been shaved smooth prior to painting in 2K purple. The Inlet manifold is pre-polished and HPC ceramic coated as is the water pump housing. A Holden Commodore alternator is low mounted and a new three row copper core radiator was fabricated. The motor is cooled by a 16" electric fan. Fuel is supplied electrically. The gear box is a four-speed MK4 Ford Zephyr unit with a custom made shifter. A one-piece drive shaft was fabricated to connect to the narrowed 1964 Studebaker Cruiser Dyna 44 differential with a 3.31 to 1 ratio. The steel wheels are Ford Falcon 15" x 6" with full moon hub caps.

## **CHASSIS**

The original 1950 chassis has an extra one-eighth inch plate on the entire length of it for extra strength and has been Z cut at the front with new front rails made the same top hat shape to accommodate the modified Holden HT front suspension which runs a Holden Commodore right-hand steer steering rack and custom made sway bar. The steering column originated from a Holden Torana with a Holden HQ steering wheel and custom centre housing fitted with a 1956 Studebaker horn button. The rear of the chassis is C-notched to accommodate the narrowed 1964 Studebaker differential which sits on 2" lower saddles on a wider set of 1952 flattened rear springs. Gas shocks are mounted on the front and air shocks at the rear. Front brakes are Holden HQ rotors and calipers and have an inline VH44 brake booster. The rear brakes are 10" Studebaker drums, and the hand brake is activated by a Mitsubishi hand lever located to the left of the driver seat.

## **INTERIOR**

A custom white and purple vinyl interior was stitched by Greg Mather at Midnight Upholstery, Hamilton New Zealand. The original dash facia was changed to right hand steer and remodeled to suit the aftermarket instruments. A custom bar was made of alloy and chromed to match the glove box hinge bar. A steel console was made to house the radio, electrical switches, and additional gauges. A Ford Escort windscreen wiper motor and Toyota Hilux heater are mounted between the dashboard and firewall. The front seats originated from a Honda Prelude and the rear seat is stock. The battery is under the rear parcel rack and speaker system. The trunk interior is trimmed to match the interior of the car. The entire car floor is covered in black nylon carpet. All new glass has been cut and acrylic rear screens were manufactured to suit.