

DAN BARRETT'S

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1969 DODGE DART SWINGER BIG BLOCK 440

What year and make is your car, and what attracted you to it?

It's a 1969 Dodge Dart Swinger Big Block 440, the second 1969 Dart I've owned. My attraction to it was



the size and body style and it being somewhat unique considering it was not the huge seller for Dodge that year. In all the cars shows I have attended here in North Florida, I have never seen another Dodge Dart so far, so the uniqueness of the car continues on.

Tell us about the history of your car.

The car was originally purchased in Florida in 1990. It was yellow with a black vinyl roof and had the 225 slant six cylinder engine. The current engine is out of a 1976 Chrysler, the transmission and front end from a 1974 Dart. The original fuel tank was removed to make room for the Mickey Thompson Indy Profile 50/14 rear tires, each tire 14 inches wide so lots of rubber meets the road. I can only drive about 75 miles before I have to start searching for a gas station as the car only gets 5 MPG!

How did you acquire it, and how long have you owned it?

I bought the car from a longtime friend in Western Pennsylvania who I'd worked with for years in a body shop up there. I bought the car from him in October 2021 and had it shipped to me in Magnolia Point.

Have you restored or customized the car, and if so, can you tell us about the process?

I spent lots of time restoring cars in my younger days, and I do some work and upgrades on the car now that I

own it, but the original build credit goes to my friend Mark, who I'd bought it from.

How often do you drive your it, and where ?

I drive the car almost weekly, weather permitting. The car is never taken out of the garage if it's rainy or even overcast. The only time it gets wet is when I wash and wax it, which is usually once a month! I drive it to local car shows here in North Florida and have won some awards for best of show a couple of times. The car gets driven maybe 700-800 miles a year and you can see it (and hear it) going through Magnolia Point on any given sunny Saturday or Sunday morning.

What do you do to maintain it and keep it running well?

I change the oil as needed, well, probably more often than needed but it's my baby so car gals & guys will understand. I baby it and it's driven cautiously and spends most of the time sitting comfortably in my garage in Magnolia Point.

Are you in any car clubs, and have you participated in any events or shows?

I belong to a local car club, The Pharoahs



International, which you may remember from the movie "American Graffiti". Our club is dedicated to the preservation of American Muscle Cars, Classics and Vintage vehicles, and contributing to local charities. You can visit our website at www.pharoahs-stjohns.com to see many photos of our members' cars and the



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background of this historic club that was originally started in 1948 by veterans returning from the war.



Each year I usually attend at least 25-30 shows or "Cruise-Ins". The Pharoahs will sponsor a new monthly Cruise-In at Beachwalk St. Johns every 4th Saturday of the month starting this April 2023. You can visit the events page on the website at <https://pharoahs-stjohns.com/events> to get all the details of our "Cars and Brunch at Beachwalk" Cruise-In.



wiring and that's the "not so fun part" trying to track down that kind of problem, but it's a labor of love for the car so I just rewired those issues and now working great.

What do you love most about owning it?

My favorite memory is the day it arrived in Green Cove Springs and probably the first "Top 10 Best of Show" I won with it at the "Cruising' To The Creek" show at Trout Creek Memorial Park and Marina. I love owning it because I always have people come up to me to just talk and ask questions about it (and try to buy it) and the fun memories from my first one all those years ago.



Are there any unique features or quirks about the car that you enjoy? And ones you don't?

Anyone that owns a "Mopar" (Dodge, Chrysler, Plymouth) muscle or classic knows they are cold-blooded engines which means it takes a while for them to warm up. I recently had to rewire the fuel pump and tachometer due to an unknown short somewhere in the

I have met and made many new friends and car enthusiasts by attending these shows. The special thing about this Dart is that it is almost identical to that first 1969 Dart that I owned, which amazingly, I also bought from my same friend Mark!

