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2011 HOLLEY LS FEST

BEECH BEND RACEWAY WAS ALIVE WITH THE GLORY OF LS-POWERED STREET CARS, SHOW CARS, AND RACE CARS OF ALL MAKES AND MODELS.

BY SCOTT PARKER
PHOTOGRAPHY BY THE AUTHOR AND JUSTIN CESLER

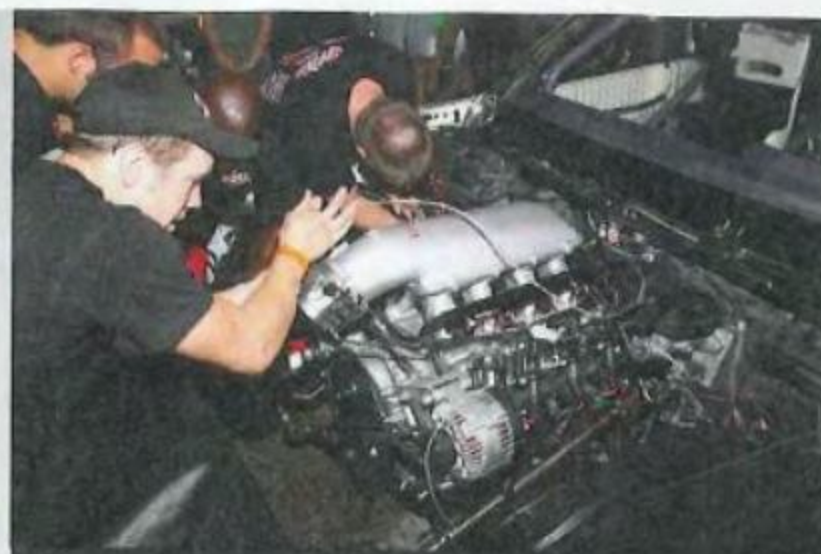
Like the previous year, a storm was brewing on the horizon, but it certainly didn't stop any of the action at Beech Bend Raceway or put a damper on the many LS enthusiasts in attendance for the Holley LS Fest. In fact, on the final day of drag racing eliminations, the crack staff managed to hustle the racers along and get the finals finished up just in the nick of time. In between Friday, September 9th and

Sunday, September 11th, though, the crew at Holley managed to cram as much action as you can imagine drawing a diverse crowd of LS-transplant import drifters, slammed Chevy trucks, crazy swaps you'd never think of, six-figure Pro Touring and G Machines, autocross nuts, car show polishers, and drag racers to Bowling Green, Kentucky. A virtual who's who of the G Machine crowd and the LS drag racing community were all in attendance as well as the many onlookers that came to watch it all unfold. Follow along as we show you the highlights, including GMHTP's Shut Your Face Race.





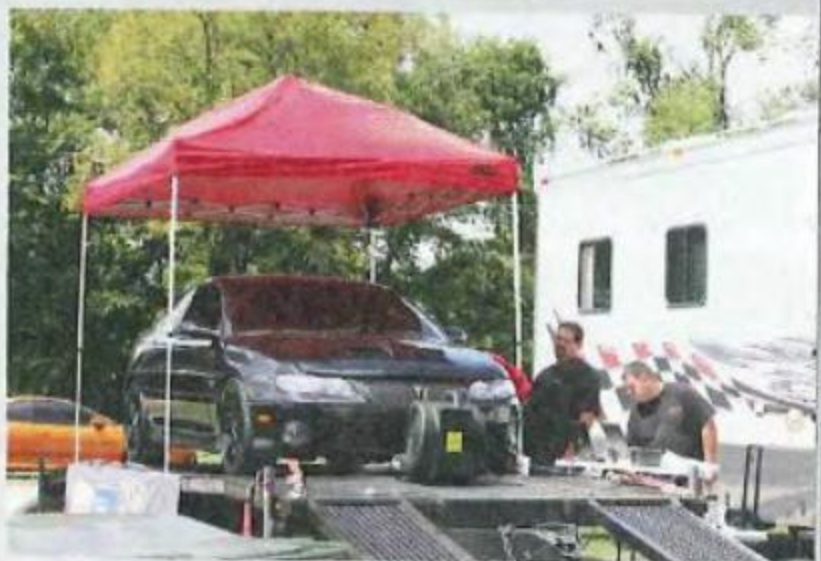
Just like last year, Holley used the LS Fest to give its customers a first-look at the new products that would be on display at SEMA and PRI. This sick individual throttle body (ITB) set up would look amazing under the hood of a fifth-gen road racer. There was also several exhaust manifolds that you can expect to see plenty of in the future.



The students at the School of Automotive Machinists came to win the Car Craft Engine Swap Challenge, and win they did. With a time of 38 minutes and 33 seconds, the SAM students removed the small-block Chevy from Mike Kurtz's pristine single-digit Monte SS and replaced it with an LS3 from Holley that sported their EFI system and I-i-Ram intake.



Rain or shine, the autocross course was hot the whole weekend. Johnny Cichowski (in a '99 Miata), who also competed in the Drifting, and Luke Hawkins (in a C5 Z) were some of the only late models to really challenge G Machine staples like the first and second-gen Camaros of Kyle and Staci Tucker from Detroit Speed, Brian Finch and Mark Steilow. The Miata ran a 42.17, good enough for second, and the Z06 went 43.61 for fourth place.



ERL and Super Chevy sponsored the Dyno Challenge, which was won by the LS9-powered Lingenfelter '10 Camaro that made 946 rwhp with nitrous in the Power Adder class, and Lewis Roberts '98 Corvette that made 502 rwhp naturally aspirated. David Willover's '05 GTO took second in n/a with 451 rwhp.



And of course "the crazy" was sponsored by Four Loko.



The Silkcy-sponsored Nissan S14 240SX of Dan Savage put on a great show for the fans, and took first place in Drifting. Plenty of other LS-powered imports took over the autocross course briefly, in the name of tire smoke, such as BMW M3s and 350Zs.



Allan Miller in the BMR Camaro is always a threat in a speed-stop competition; the blown 416 LS3 and R-compound Toyos make it stop nearly as fast as it goes. His 8.63 was good enough for third place using stock Brembos.



Though it wasn't in contention for any prizes, this LS-powered sand rail definitely got points for style in the 0-60-0. Notice the right rear tire coming off the pavement.



However, it was Edward Timmerman in the '99 Camaro with CTS-V brakes that took first with an 8.23 and 25 points in the ABS category. Timmerman's twin-turbo Camaro went on to take fourth overall in the Grand Champion standings.



David Childress was one of several people to take advantage of BMR Suspension's LS Fest customer promotion, and capped that off with some prize money for winning True Street with an average of 8.93 and a best time of 8.812 using a single turbo, LS2 combo with a 4L80E. David, aka Mighty Mouse, says his '98 TA is no trailer queen and loves to prove just how streetable it is.



Yes, the track was definitely hooking. This was among several broken driveshafts, but the most impressive for having also taken the torque arm with it.

Don Dixon's blown GTO from Heintz Racing took home the victory in TCI Auto Rumble, running a 9.99 on his 10.0 index in a very tight race—only .02 second separated him from Mike Morris in the '57 Chevy (in a double break-out).





Ronnie Hackelton from Hazen, Arkansas won the BMR 5th Gen Camaro Challenge, beating out the BMR-sponsored Shawn Calabrese who red-lit, with a time of 10.46. For a fifth-gen that's cookin'!



TJ Strange of RPM Transmissions was one of the most interesting entrants to SAM All Motor, a big hydraulic roller spins this Z06's LS7 with an RPM 6060 and 4.10 rear. TJ went to base Corvette rear brakes to fit the Weld 15x10 wheels and Hoosier 275 radials. When he gets the slipper clutch figured out, this should be a 9-second ride fit for the street. Unfortunately, a few issues kept him in the mid 10s.

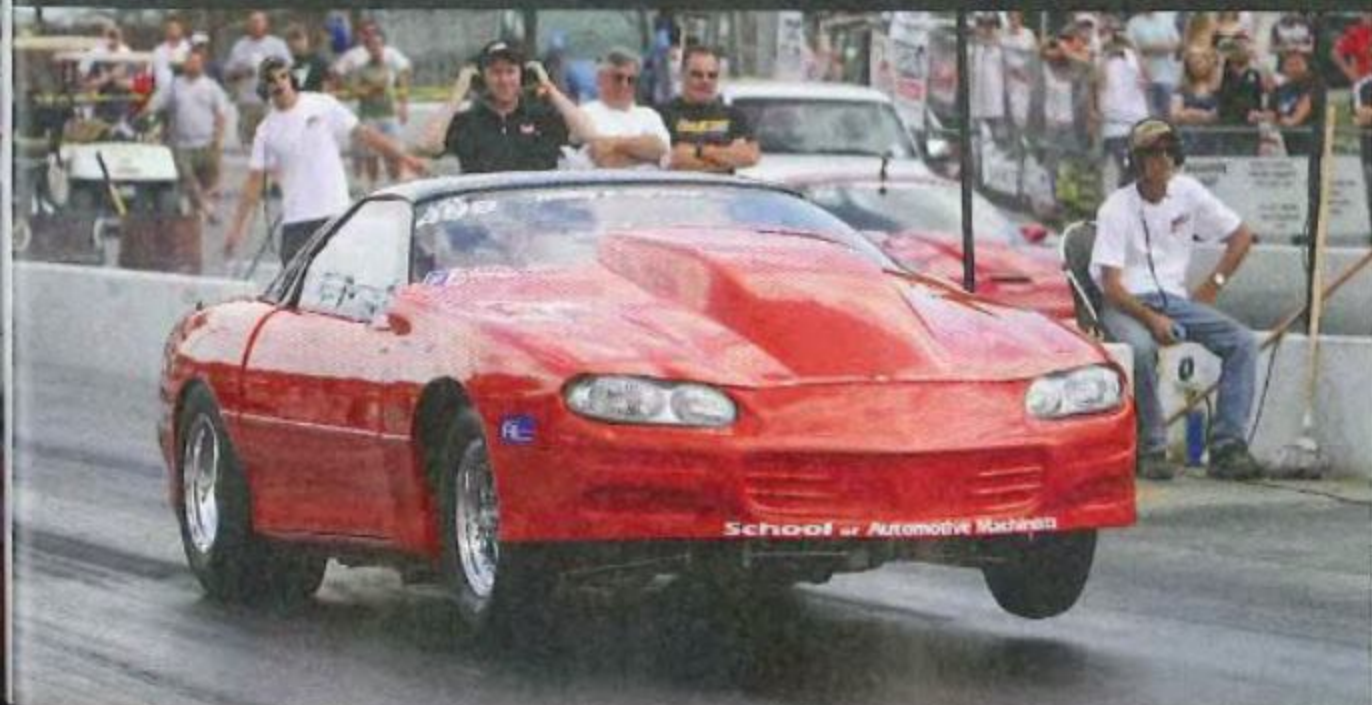


Plenty of rumors had been floating around that Joe Huneycutt's Camaro was running some mid to low 8s during testing, which proved true when he clicked off an 8.64 at 154 mph in Bowling Green to become the #1 qualifier. Predictably this Late Model Engines-built big-cube, cathedral port LSX made it all the way to the finals, but his 8.63 at 151 mph was no match for his teacher.

Judson Massengill once again took the victory in All Motor, who clicked off an amazing 8.34 during the first round of eliminations. Against Huneycutt in the finals, he only managed an 8.42 at 163 after falling asleep at the tree, but it was enough. Look for Joe and few others who have made some mid-season changes to give the SAM Camaro a run for its money at the Shootout.



Lingenfelter's fifth-gen bid in the Real Street class made its debut. This purpose-built race car is one of the nicest you'll ever encounter, and should be in serious contention once it is tuned and dialed-in. The LS Fest proved to be more of a tuning session for the new single turbo combination as it clicked off several 9-second runs on low boost (including a 9.13 at 150), only to be eliminated in the first round via launch issues.





Paul Falcon in the nitrous-huffing Formula from North Carolina was the #1 qualifier in Wiseco Real Street with an 8.78 at 153 mph. After eliminating LPE, he had a bye run leading up to the finals. He put up a great fight, cutting a .059-second light and running 8.82 at 153, but second place was Paul's destiny.



It was Kentucky local and fellow nitrous-lover Adam Preston, who made a huge splash last year at the LS Fest in his third-gen, that took home first place. In the new setup he cut a .075-second light and 1.25 short-time to grab an early lead, and the big-cube, solid roller motor helped him hang on for an 8.50 at 159. Preston took the hard road in eliminations, facing Charles Polle and #3 qualifier Ted Timmerman.



The Ohio Boys made some big off-season changes and finally debuted at the LS Fest in Drag Radial. Mike Brown was battling issues all weekend long, including a broken rear shock. However, the larger ERL/Kurt Urban motor, new heads and bullhorns should help him surpass his previous best of 7.27 at 200 mph.



Mark Koehler, also of the Ohio Boys crew, had a little bit of luck through eliminations as his new solid roller, single turbo ERL motor powered him all the way through to the finals as some others such as Mark Carlyle and Mike Meeks were not so lucky with their mid-season changes. Mark was the fastest through qualifying with a 7.62 at 190 mph, but took second place in a tight finale.

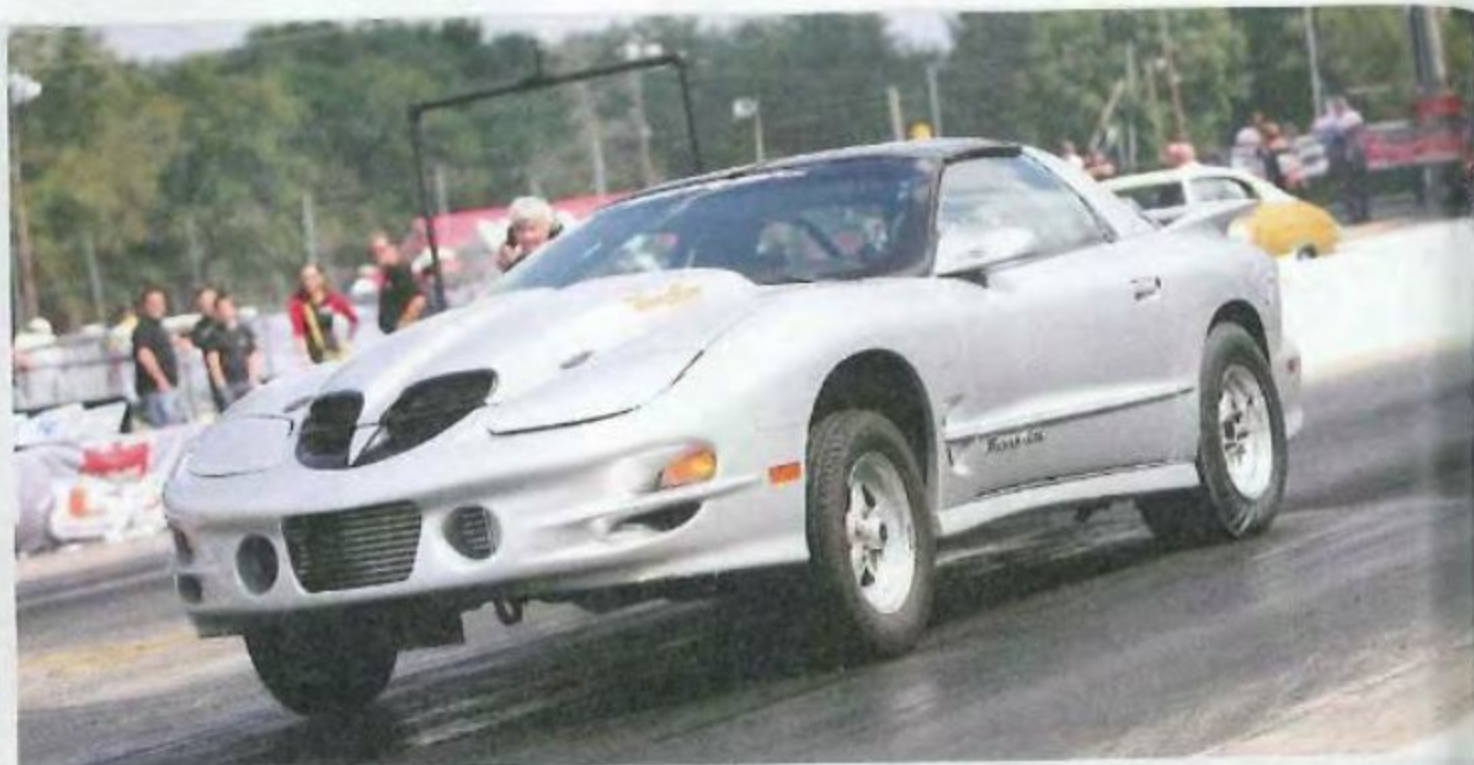
Though not a high-profile LS racer, Andy Essary has plenty of street cred in the Chicago area and he was one of the most consistent in Callies Drag Radial. His twin-76mm-turbo Trans Am ran straight as an arrow and 7.6 to 7.8 nearly every pass. He narrowly missed the finals, losing to the eventual winner with a 7.66 at 186 to his opponent's (and eventual winner) 7.60 at 187.

Though both cars were off-pace, Anthony Manna barely edged out Koehler with nearly identical 7.92 elapsed times. Manna's '98 Camaro caught the Formula at the stripe with a full head of steam as Koehler limped across with a hurt piston. The single turbo combo had Manna run a 7.60 during eliminations (and qualified with a 7.80). His Camaro was also very consistent throughout the event, 1.30 to 1.31 sixty-foots with some of the best reaction times in the field.





The GMHTP Shut Your Face Race was the only eighth-mile class, and it drew out some cars we probably would not have seen otherwise. Check out this C5 that Georgia-native Howard Wolf pilots. Though a little outmatched to our eventual winner, Howard's 427 with nitrous, RPM Level 7 4L60E and Stage 3 C6Z06 differential kept him competitive with a 5.75 at 123 mph qualifying pass.



Ray Litz's '02 Trans Am is no stranger to the pages of GMHTP, and his Shearer single turbo kit and ERL motor helped him put up a valiant effort. He qualified third with a 5.49 at 134. Ray turned it up in the semifinals against our eventual winner, and bowed out with a respectable 5.31 at 139.



Tim Akers' '99 Trans Am from Kingston Springs, TN sports some wild graphics and a front-mount 88mm turbo. While still tweaking, he mustered a 5.83 at 121 during qualifying. Tim was prepared to put Litz to task in the opening round, but he red-lit and it was over before it started.



Second place went to Steve Hopkins in the '98 Camaro from Bartlett, TN, whose sick nitrous combo was right behind the #1 qualifier all weekend long with a 5.28 at 137 and even hit a 5.19 in the first round, but tire spin off the line cost him in the finals. With Hopkins' more typical 1.30 short-time and the .061 light it would have been a tight race.

Brian Black was the favorite to win given his experience and incredible Baxter Racing Engines/Nitrous Outlet combo. Brian built his immaculate '98 Formula to be the fastest nitrous LS car, and has reportedly gone an 8.05 in testing with a dismal 1.32 short time. Lately he's been focusing his attention on the eighth-mile and X275, helping him qualify with a 5.15 at 140. He definitely earned the win with a 5.22 at 139 mph on a .097 reaction time. Look for a feature on Brian's car in an upcoming issue.

