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Tell 'Em They're Right
(Even if they're not)

Burton & Truesdell

Mr B. Takes Arc Audio's 6022s
To the Limit

Tony Collabo (left)
and Spiro Manolatos,
co-owners of
Speedworld,
Elmhurst, N.Y.

The Ultimate Muscle

-Part Three

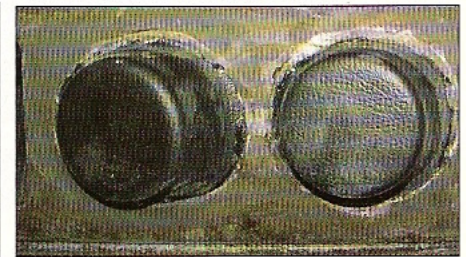
By Jefferson Bryant

Welcome to the final part of The Ultimate Muscle. Over the past few months this series has followed the buildup of a 1971 Buick GS convertible, illustrating some new and different techniques for building custom cars. In this, the final episode, some of these techniques have come together to show how they can be employed by a local shop to save time and money when building a custom ride.

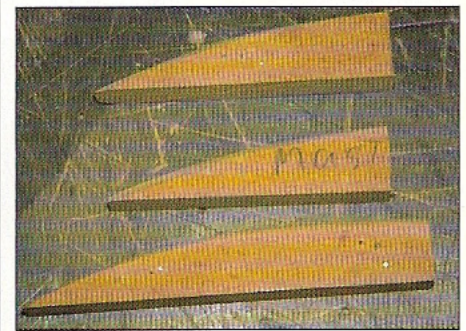
The projects involved in this issue are the buildup of the factory dash to house a SAVV 5.6-inch TV and two 2 3/8-inch air

ride gauges, and the subwoofer enclosure. By using both vacuum forming and fiberglass, the build time was drastically reduced and produced amazing results with very little cost involved.

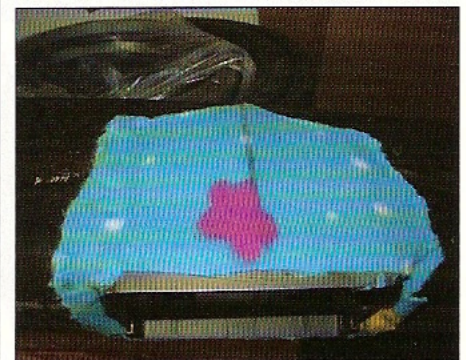
For the dash, a SAVV 5.6-inch TV was mounted using the factory headrest pod, which was molded into the factory 1971 Buick dash pad along with a pair of vacuum-formed gauge pods molded from .140-inch thick plastic. Using CA glue (Cyanoacrylate), both the TV and gauge pods were attached to the factory dash pad after it was cut so the new parts would fit



5. The pods have been permanently mounted in place with CA glue and ground smooth.

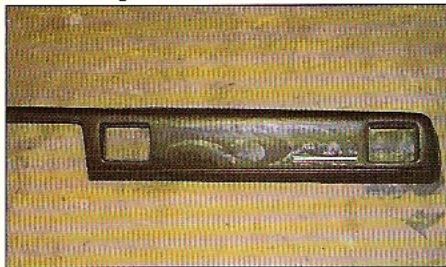


6. To match the shape used on the trunk lid TV, MDF patterns were cut and glued to the top of the dash behind the TV pod.



7. Pattern fleece was stretched over the pod and dash. Pattern fleece tends to have a better grain and be a little heavier than simple colored fleece, making it yield better results with fiberglass.

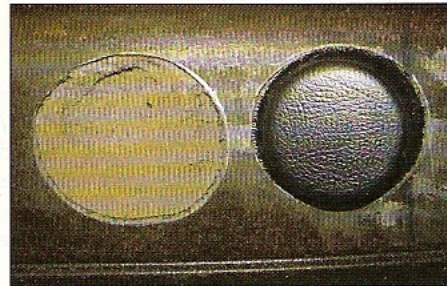
Factory Dash Buildup



1. The original factory dash pad, made of hard plastic, foam and vinyl.



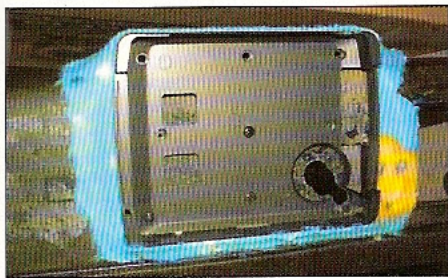
2. These are vacuum-formed plastic pods designed to fit 2 3/8-inch gauges created from a simple Bondo plug.



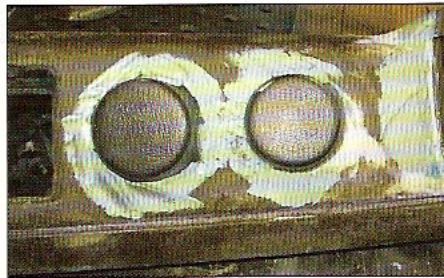
3. Here the dash has been cut to fit the plastic pod flush with the outer surface.



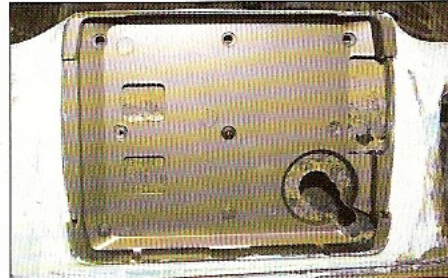
4. The SAVV 5.6-inch TV pod and gauge pods are held in place using CA glue.



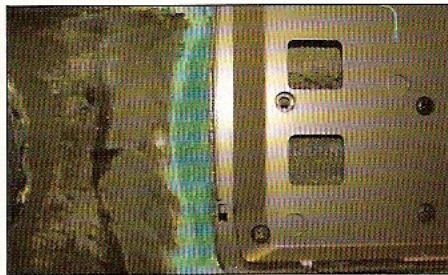
8. CA glue is the best way to fasten the fleece to the base material. The excess fleece is trimmed away before any resin is applied.



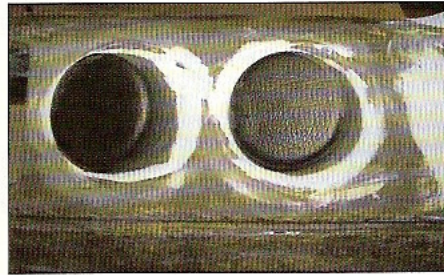
11. Body filler was also applied to the gauge pods.



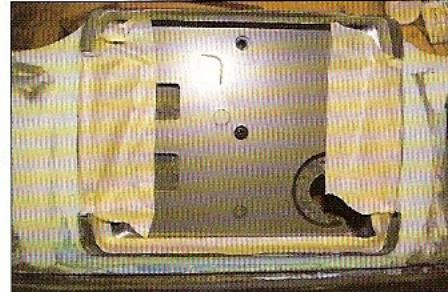
14. The same 36-, 80-, 120-grit treatment was given to the front of the TV pod. Be careful not to get body filler in the slots for the TV.



9. Be sure to "push" the resin into the fleece, and follow the natural grain pattern for a smooth finish that requires less grinding.



12. The filler was sanded first using 36-grit, then 80-, then 120-grit sand paper.



15. The edges of the TV pod were taped off so the clips that lock the SAVV TV in place will fit after the primer is applied.



10. After grinding the cured fiberglass with a 36-grit Roloc disc on a die-grinder, body filler was applied.



13. For the larger top area, 120-grit was used on a palm D/A sander to speed things up.



16. The dash is now back in the car for a test fit. It has been sanded smooth and is ready for texture and paint.

flush. Then using MDF, small curved shapes were made to mimic shapes used in the trunk-mounted TV built in the first part. Fleece was then stretched and glued in place to smooth the transition. A little resin and some light grinding, and it's ready for body filler. The gauge pods were glued in place, ground smooth and received a little body filler as well. The whole dash was then sanded and smoothed and prepped with primer. The dash pad will now be sent to get painted with the rest of the parts and it will all be painted at one time.

The subwoofer enclosure for this project will be a little different from the norm. Instead of fiberglass, the exposed portion of the enclosure is made of vacuum-formed plastic mounted to an MDF enclosure. By

using the plastic components, the entire box was built in three hours, as opposed to several days with fiberglass. First the box was constructed, like most boxes, using 5/8-inch MDF, glued and nailed together. The box is ported, using two slot ports, terminating on either side of the enclosure. Another benefit of using the plastic woofer pods is that the box weighs very little and the wood portion is very small, since the pods add .33 cubic feet of airspace a piece.

Once the box was created, two square MDF rings were cut to fit the bottom of the woofer pods. Those rings were then attached to the box and a router was used to remove the wood from inside the ring, leaving an opening. The pods were then mounted to the rings. To finish the install, a

cover panel will be made so all that is seen is the woofer pods.

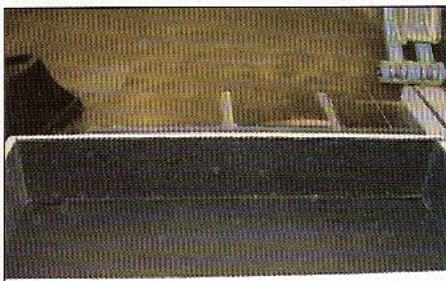
That about sums it up for The Ultimate Muscle. There is still more to be added: a SAVV DVD changer and more TVs, Dakota Digital gauges, air ride suspension from EAI, racing seats, a new interior, a convertible top tonneau cover, FlameThrowers from AutoLoc, and a few more surprises. Stick around to see how it all turns out.

Special thanks goes out to those who helped with this project: Kyle Ambrose, Billy Naden, Rico Thompson, Mark Myers, Phil White, Boyd Coddington, The Hoffman Group, Diamond Auto Body, Rockford Fosgate, EAI, Dakota Digital, SAVV Mobile Multimedia, Nitrous Express, Select Products, Kumho Tires and Ohio Generator. ⚡

Subwoofer Enclosure Buildup



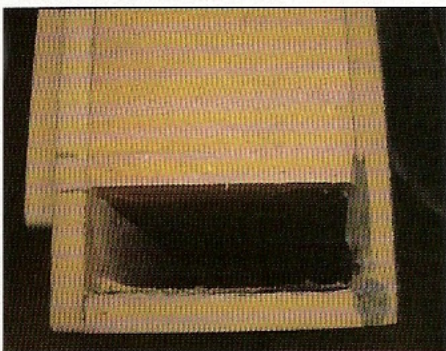
1. The mold for the woofer pods was built using simple fiberglass and MDF. It has been back-filled with body filler to hold up against the force of the vacuum.



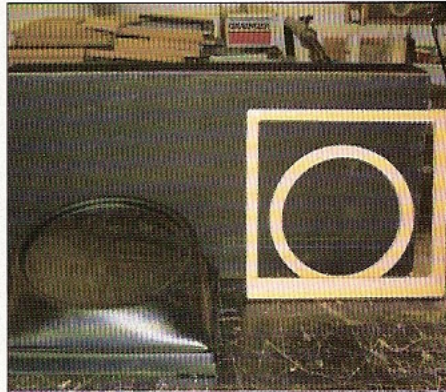
2. The box started as a basic 1.3 cubic foot enclosure, 5/8-inch MDF was glued and nailed together.



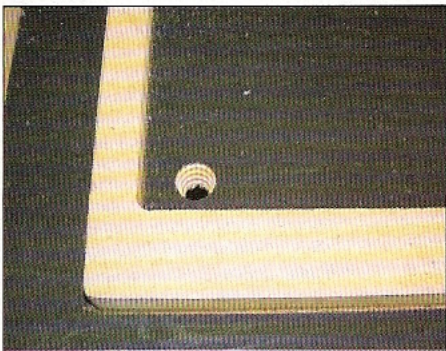
3. The box was ported using two 2x5x15-inch slot ports, tuning at 32hz.



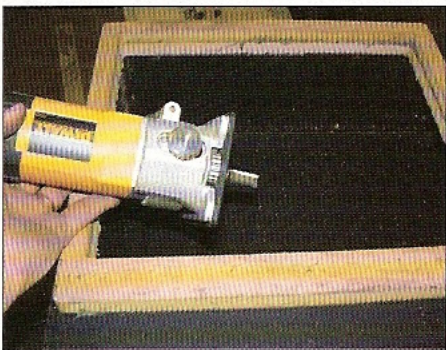
4. The ends of the ports were cut using a laminate trimmer and a top-bearing router bit.



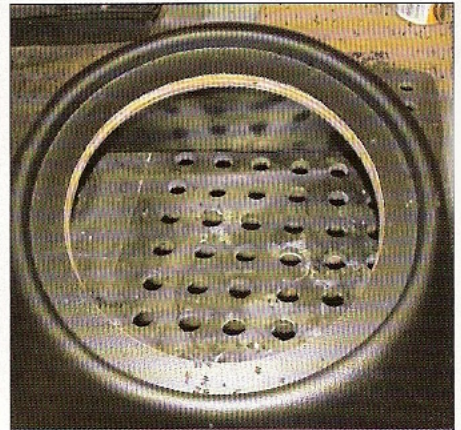
5. The basic box, woofer pod and the wood rings needed to finish the enclosure.



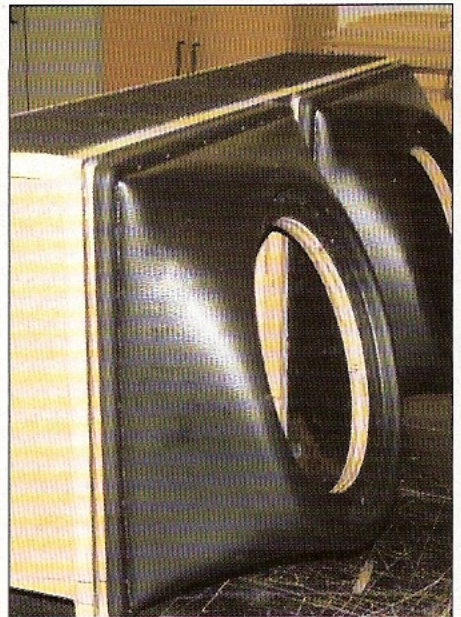
6. The wood ring was cut to fit the woofer pod. The ring was then glued and nailed to the enclosure. Note the pilot hole.



7. The laminate trimmer was used with a bottom-bearing bit to trim the opening of the box. The laminate trimmer is easier here to use than a full-sized router.



8. A round MDF ring was glued and brad-nailed onto the woofer pod. This adds holding power so the heavy woofer won't rip out of the plastic.



9. The woofer pods were then glued and brad-nailed in place on the rings mounted earlier. The enclosure weighs a total of 32.3 pounds, versus a typical wood enclosure of the same size at 54 pounds. Big weight savings!



10. Jumping ahead: the new Boyd Coddington Smoothie II 20-inch wheels with Kumho Ecsta Supra 255/35/20 tires. Wheels make a huge difference in perception for a custom ride.