

# Street MACHINE

PRESENTS AUSTRALIA'S SLICKEST

# COMMODORES



**10 KILLER FEATURE CARS!**

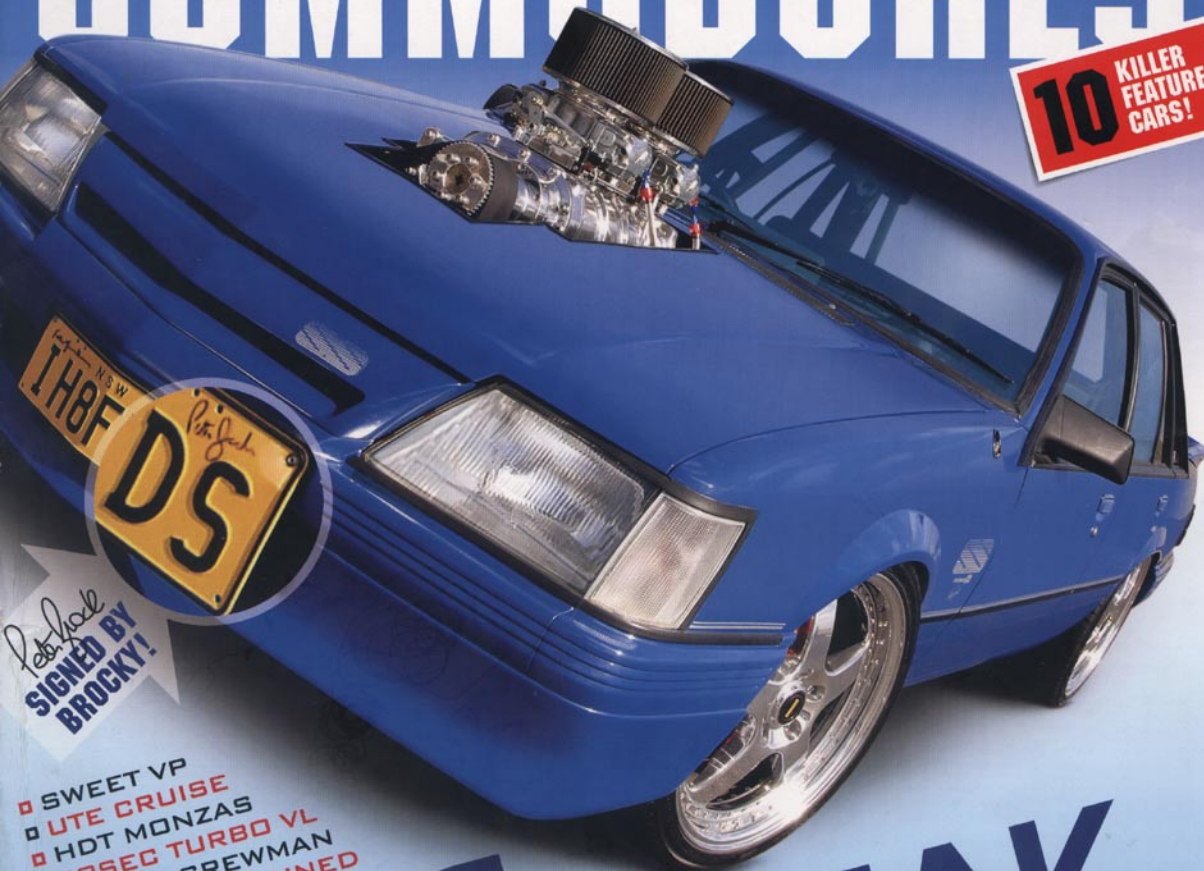


Photo face SIGNED BY BROCKY!

- ▣ SWEET VP
- ▣ UTE CRUISE
- ▣ HDT MONZAS
- ▣ 10SEC TURBO VL
- ▣ 760HP CREWMAN
- ▣ DYNOS EXPLAINED

# BLUE STREAK

BLOWN, BOLD AND BEAUTIFUL VK SS



**Specialists in...**

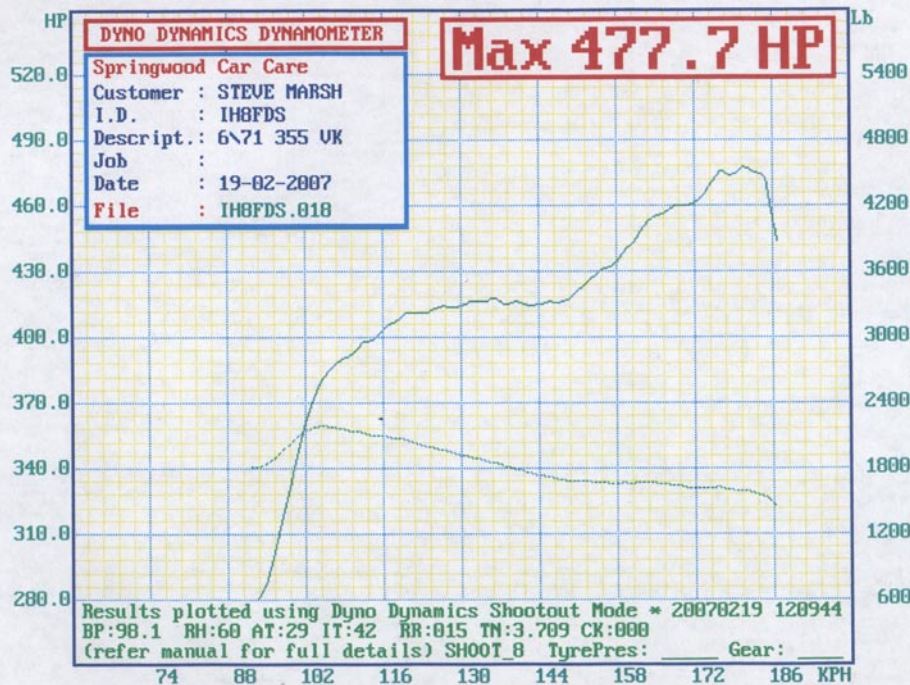
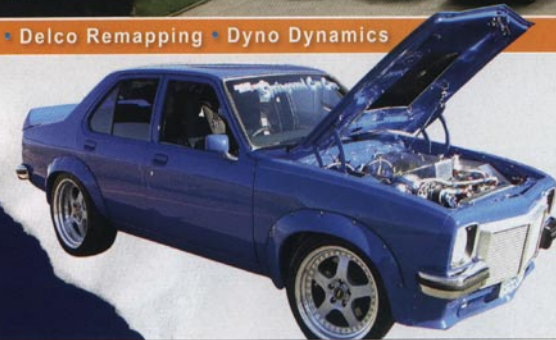
- Performance modifications
- Supercharging & turbo charging
- EFI diagnosis & re-mapping
- Aftermarket computer fitting & tuning
- Performance transmissions & diffs
- Custom exhaust systems
- Dyno tuning
  - Tuning for increased performance
  - Improved fuel economy
  - More power and torque

## Springwood Car Care



VCM-Suite • C.A.P.A. Flash Tuner • Delco Remapping • Dyno Dynamics

Lot 2 / Unit 1  
Lawson Rd  
Springwood, NSW  
Fax 02 4751 6066  
Phone 02 4751 6036  
www.springwoodcarcare.com



Story GLENN TORRENS Photos WARWICK KENT

# LONG WAY TO THE TOP

Steve Marsh's HDT-badged SS is a massive investment, but it's his own fine variation on a theme – and a fitting tribute to his idol





**T**HE LATE – how I hate writing that word – and legendary Peter Brock's HDT Special Vehicles never made them like this! But that didn't stop Sydney's Steve Marsh blending bits of Brock's possibly most famous road warrior with a big dose of jaw-dropping grunt to create a blown blue beast that sucks in attention simply by standing still.

It's the latest in a long line of mostly hi-po machinery Steve has owned. His first Commodore was a 4.2-litre four-speed VC sedan, but he's been into cars for longer than that. "I began by

mucking around with rotaries," admits Steve, who is a mechanic. "Those things cost me my licence! The cops picked on me; everywhere I went, I was getting pulled over and defected. But that was when I was 19 or 20 – I've grown up now." Moving a bit closer to Holden heritage, he used to play with Geminis, too. "I had one with a Piazza Turbo engine in it," he says. "That went real hard, it had Simmons and all the gear on it."

But Steve grew tired of the fours and eventually bought a VC, the first of several Commodores he's owned. "The VC I had eventually was replaced by a 5.0-litre SL/E," Steve recounts. "That was sold to fund a Walkinshaw, which made way for a VL

series Brock. Then I sold the Brock and bought this thing," he says, matter of factly. It's not a Group A, but it is an HDT-plated SS. "It was in really good shape; I bought it privately; and it had already been converted into a SS Group A replica when I grabbed it."

Bought as a project, Steve had a build program in mind. But, as he explains, "It got out of control! I just wanted a tough little streeter, so I built a 355 (5.7-litre) engine with a Harrop stroker crank in it, Demon carby, VN heads, a Harrop manifold. That was a good little engine – it ran a quarter in 11.8@115mph. Then I put it on a dyno for some tuning... and lunched the engine!"

As you could imagine, Steve wasn't very happy with that. "They held it flat for too long. I asked them to stick a probe in – the exhaust – because I thought it was too lean, but they fobbed me off. They killed it, but wouldn't come to the party with any expenses."

What you are looking at is effectively engine number three for the blue balltearer. Engine number two was based on the same block and crank as engine one, but rebuilt – it had toasted a piston – and with the 6/71 supercharger added from Geoff Ramsey in Greystanes. "But I didn't have a crank support on it," explains Steve, "so it broke the crank and wrecked the block."

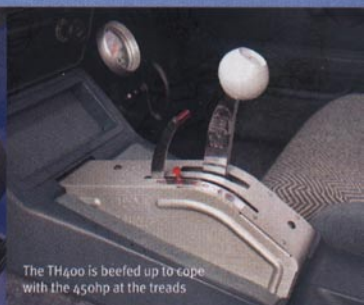
Take a look at engine number three. "I've got a crank support at this time," says Steve. "It reduces the load on the nose of the crank imposed by the blow drive belt so there shouldn't be any more dramas." We'd like to think not because, when Steve begins to list what's in it, it's obvious he has invested a fair amount of time, effort and cash in his new engine.

It's built on a VT series block, the one with factory roller lifters. The crank is another Harrop stroker, maintaining this engine at the 5.7-litre capacity Steve likes, spinning within King bearings clamped in four-bolt main bearing caps. Arias pistons, Hellfire rings and Scat rods

Demon carbs sitting on the 6/71 are a certain attention-grabber!

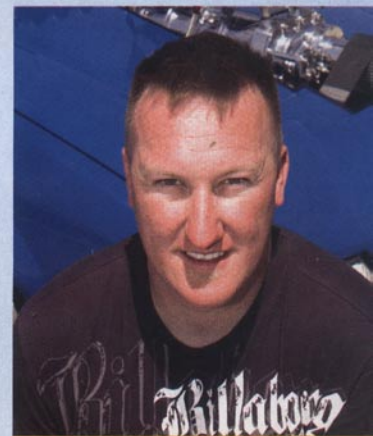


Vital feedback from bonnet-mounted Pro-Comp clocks



The TH400 is beefed up to cope with the 450hp at the treads

## WHEN STEVE BEGINS TO LIST WHAT'S IN IT, IT'S OBVIOUS HE HAS INVESTED A FAIR AMOUNT OF TIME, EFFORT AND CASH



### ► THANKS

- Antoinette, my long-suffering wife; Mick; Timmy; Clarky; Stevie; Terry; Toby; Jamie; Gerald, from Springwood car care; Joe, from Rocket Industries; John, at JPS Automotive.

do the push 'n' pull and the valvetrain is made up of Crower, Crow and Crane products. The basis for the lubrication system is a High Energy sump feeding a standard oil pump but it's the metal monster reaching for the sky through the bonnet that gets the attention: two Demon carbs sitting on the 6/71 pump seem to do that! After machining and balancing, the engine was lovingly assembled by Jamie Farmer of Cylinder Head Dynamics in Penrith, NSW. Darren from Mood Motorsport assembled the cooling system with an alloy radiator drawn on by thermo fans. He's also responsible for the rocker covers.

"I didn't build it to run in dyno comps," says Steve. "I built it as a tough all-rounder because I love blown cars. I had it dynoed with a smaller exhaust (now it has Pacemakers and three-inch mandrel-bent exhaust) and it had 390; so with its current specs, I reckon it has another 50 or 60 horses," says Steve. That dyno run wasn't without dramas either – but it wasn't as devastating as the engine blow-up. The only problem was the fan that sucked itself forward onto the radiator...

The GM TH400 three-speed auto was beefed-up by Mahan from Khalil Race Transmissions in St Peters to cope with the 15psi-fed 5.7-litre with

around 450hp at the wheels. The rear axle is a VL unit as fitted to the Turbo. "I won't use a nine-inch," says Steve. "The VL series axle is fine – a good diff. It's strong enough, much lighter and takes less power to drive."

Brakes are Harrop four-piston units. "I found these top-shelf Premiums at a swap-meet. They weren't hard to install – just a floating disc over a hub and some brackets for the callipers. Specialised Brake and Clutch in St Marys sorted it out for me." They live inside classic Simmons FR19s suspended on King springs and Koni dampers with a bit of plastic here and there.

"It was blue when I got it, but I wanted it to be mint," Steve asserts. "So I had a mate, Terry Jones at Pymble Smash, fix up a few stone chips and some 'dusty' areas. The trim was okay, but it looked more like a Berlina, so my mate Paul trimmed it in the proper cloth and I threw in new carpets." There's also a clutch of extra gauges.

"I was considering mini-tubbing the rear by widening the inner wheel arches. But then I thought, why bother? No matter what I do, it's still going to wheelspin..."

What about those number plates? "They get a few good comments and a few bad comments!"

Steve laughs. "I was at a promo day and Brocky was there – I wanted him to sign my glovebox lid – and he said 'Gee, I love those plates...' so I asked him to sign them. He was glad to!

"I don't drive it very often, but as soon as I park it, I get a crowd around it," says Steve. "Then the questions begin: what's this, what's that. It's good how people like it – especially a lot of younger kids. They're enthralled by it: 'yeah, cool!'"

"I always stop and chat to them," he continues. They're the ones who will be building cars and enjoying this hobby in the future."

Brocky would be proud of that attitude! 🏁

▶ **STEVE MARSH**  
1985 VK SS

▶ **DRIVE**

- Engine: Holden V8
- Built by: Cylinder Head Dynamics
- Capacity: 5.7-litre (355ci)
- Heads: VT series
- Pistons: Arias
- Conrods: Scat
- Crank: Harrop stroker
- Carbs: Twin Demons
- Ignition: Holden electronic
- Exhaust: Pacemaker pipes, mandrel-bent exhaust
- Radiator: Mood Motorsports alloy
- Sump: High Energy
- Output: Around 450hp (335kW) at the tyres

▶ **TRANS**

- Gearbox: TH400 three-speed auto
- Diff: VL series Borg Warner

▶ **ROLLING**

- Rims: Simmons FR19
- Rubber: 235/35 Ventus
- Suspension: King springs, Koni dampers
- Picks: HSV Premiums front and rear

▶ **BODY**

- Outside: Holden/HDT SS Group A replica body pack

▶ **INSIDE**

- Seats: HDT
- Trim: HDT
- Gauges: Auto Meter
- Wheel: HDT



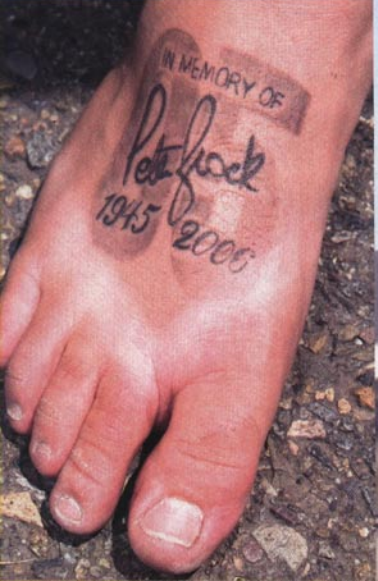
New tiller, B&M shifter and clocks cover-off the inside



Carbs and blower dominate sweet-as engine bay

**INSPIRATION**

LIKE a lot of enthusiasts – including yours truly – Steve still reels from the loss of Peter Brock last year. "I've got pics of him up in the garage and I sit there often and look at him... and I can't believe it. It seems so surreal; it's difficult to come to grips with. It's bullshit..." Steve's personal dedication, this tattoo, was applied on September 9, 2006, the day after the incident that claimed Peter Brock's life. "It's my dedication for all that Brocky did for blokes like us. He was my idol."



Classic Simmons FR19s look the part on this VK SS

