

# **DIABLO A's MODEL OF THE MONTH MARCH 2021**

## **MIKE & HEATHER COZAD'S 1930 Town Sedan**

Dad was working with another gentleman on his A in 1962. Apparently, there was an agreement between the two that if dad did the work instead of being paid, he would get the sedan minus what the other guy needed. So, dad did the work and got the car minus the engine and the rear fenders. At the time, dad was still in high school and was driving around in a '30 coupe with his friends and having a great time.



So, the sedan sat for a number of years, probably in his driveway. Eventually, dad, Uncle Eddie and some friends got started on the restoration somewhere in 1965. A little creativity was used in the restoration process at this point. Namely, since mom and dad got married in 1967, dad now had a house and a wife to support.

So he did what any young enterprising mechanic who was working for the US Air Force would do. He went to the DRMO section of McClellan AFB and brought what he needed there. So, almost all of the nuts, bolts, washers and screws used on the car were aircraft grade. Since the interior was shot, he had to fabricate a few things like springs, seat backs and floorboards. Somewhere, dad got a hold of a mattress and voila-new seat springs! He also took the body off during the restoration and redid the wood, replacing what was needed and leaving certain pieces alone.

So, the car is now done, it is 1970 and here I come. Dad had gotten rid of his beloved coupe but still had the sedan, an AA flatbed truck, plus a VW. The AA eventually went to Hawaii and the VW left, but dad kept the sedan. I grew up with it sitting in the garage and only being driven

occasionally. One of my earliest memories is standing up under the car right next to the rear spring. I for some reason thought that was the greatest thing.

Growing up I also knew that if I scratched that car, dad was going to scratch me but probably a bit harder. So, when I graduated from College and dad gave me the title, my jaw naturally hit the floor. The look on my face must have been priceless. A few more years went by and she sat and sat. Slowly I started buying parts for her. I first went through and rebuilt all the brakes with new drums, hardware, linings etc. Then new tubes and tires and now she was ready for the road again after a 20-year hiatus.

2003 rolled around and intervened like a Mack truck. My guard unit got deployed for a year and when I got back, I got a new job back in California. So, the car was in North Carolina again waiting for some attention. Then mom and dad moved back to Oregon due to a change of jobs.

Fast forward to 2010. I made plans for dad and I to attend the MAFCA National in Vancouver BC. I was so looking forward to the trip in the car, I spent all of 2009 getting ready for it. Finally, the day arrives, and we pack the car up with all of the usual spare parts, oil, water, gas, luggage etc. We hit the road and are cruising at a stately 50 mph on the freeway from Eagle Point, OR. to Portland, OR. our first stop.

Life is great in the slow lane. We stopped to get gas at Rice Hill in southern Oregon and then it happened-the noise. I shut her down quickly. Dad and I just sat for a moment and then I fired her back up to listen to the engine. She was knocking really bad. I even got out popped the hood and listened, but I could not tell where the noise was coming from. So, we had it towed from the gas station to a lot and called AAA.

At this point we assumed she was about to throw a rod and I was really bummed out as I was so looking forward to this trip. So, she got towed home; we packed the things in the Toyota 4Runner and left for Vancouver that night and had a wonderful time. While there, dad and I explored options for a new engine, rebuild or replace. After weighing the options, it was decided to rebuild the spare block.

We got home and the next day tore the engine down. Pan off-all rods good. Head off-little bits of metal in the #2 cylinder. When dad had the engine rebuilt in 1984 valve seat inserts were installed, dad did not know about them or had forgotten about them. Apparently, one of them failed and disintegrated. So, I started saving money and rebuilt the spare block. I bought a Snyder 5.5 head, Burlington crank and shaved the flywheel down a few pounds.

Now she runs like a dream. When I finally had a garage built, I was able to drive her from Medford, Or. to Oakland, CA. her new home. She went over the Siskiyou Mountains without going below 30 mph once. When we got into the Central Valley, we moved over to Hwy 99, which is a two-lane Hwy and it was like I was driving back in the 30's again.

In order to stay off of the freeway as much as possible I chose the route through the small towns. Well right before Livermore were going to down some roads that had not been kept up to date by Caltrans. I was having fun bouncing around-dad was not. He was in the Toyota pulling a trailer. I am sure he had a few choice words that were headed my way.

I am still slowly replacing parts that need to be replaced and fine-tuned as money and time permit. At this point I am just driving her wheels off and having fun. I am scared to think about a full resto as I don't have 25-25K or the space right now to do it. So I will just be forced to get another Model A, so I can drive that one around while Barb gets a full restoration.

Mike







