

Late Boomer

Born at seven years of age, Lidio Iacobelli's SN-95 is finally making noise

Text and Photos by Dale Amy
It's been a long time in the making. Heck, we originally heard about Lidio Iacobelli's "orange car" even before some then-president went and added the term "Lewinsky" to the Dictionary of Inadvisable Office Etiquette. In fact, it sat around half-finished for so long that we were beginning to wonder if the eye-grabbing SN-95 would ever pound pavement under its own power. But now that it's

finally here, in typical Lidio fashion, the exacting level of detail alone probably makes it worth the seven-year wait—even though its ultimate mission in life evolved radically over the intervening years. Yup, it's been the better part of a decade since Lidio dragged what was then a spanking-new, production-line reject, '94 body-in-white home to his Alternative Auto Performance shop in Mt. Clemens, Michigan. It was the first year of the SN-95 bodystyle, and Lidio had plans to turn the empty shell into a state-of-the-art Pro 5.0 car. He even

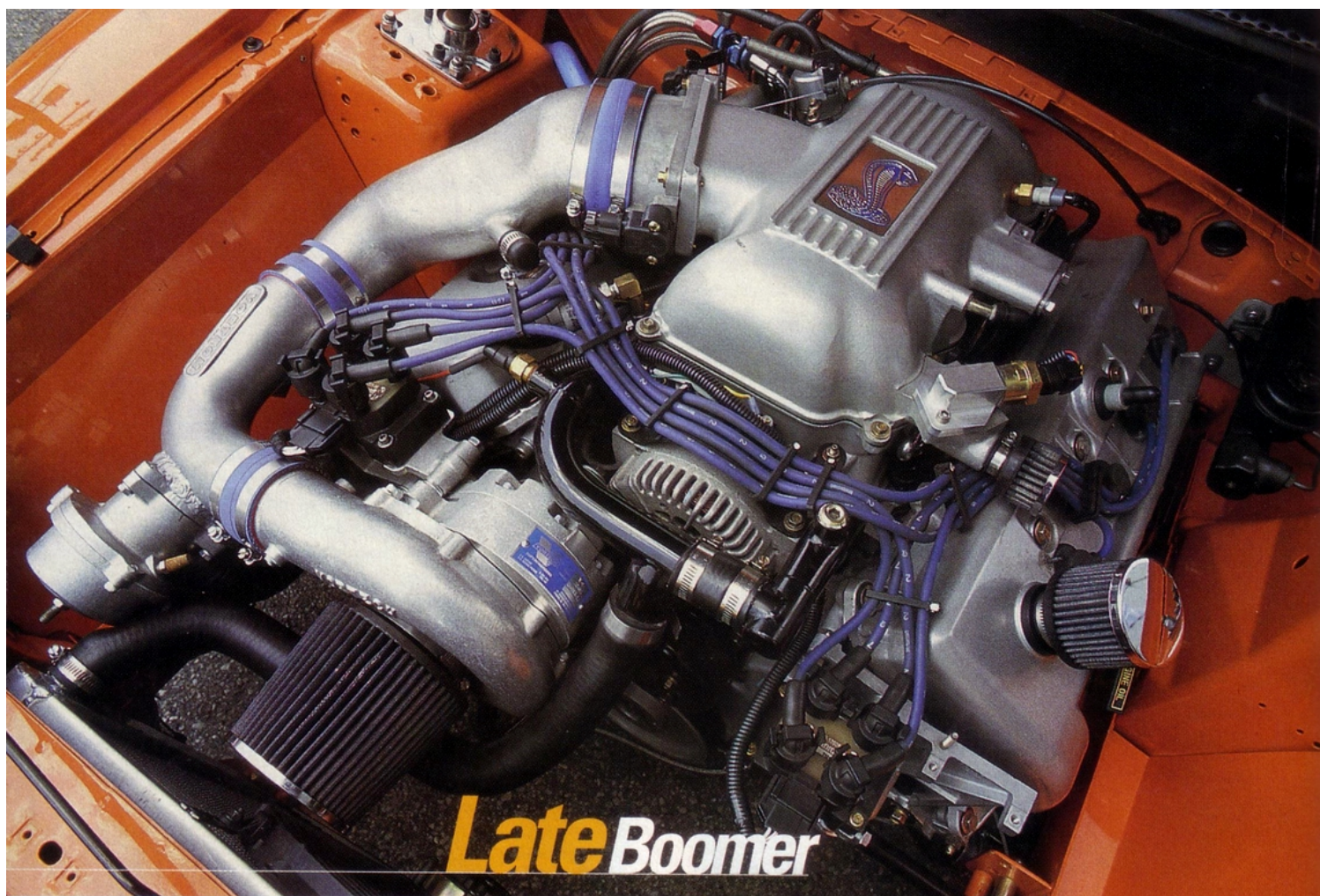
Horse Sense: Lidio's chassis was completed so long ago that tubular K-members weren't available, thus he had the stock K-member acid-dipped and modified by MPR Racing.

began construction of a Vortech Mondo-blown 347 with all the best go-fast goodies of the day—eons ago in Pro 5.0 technology. But between business and family demands, and the constantly spiraling costs of Mustang's quickest class, Lidio soon changed his mind. "With the way that class went," he says, "I lost interest in that type of racing. I'm an average guy, with a family. Pro 5.0 is a class for high rollers...."

In the meantime, however, he had already shipped the unibody to Mike Pustelny at MPR Racing in Almont, Michigan, for fabrication of a cage and a four-link, tubed rear. With a stock-style front end and the four-link rear, the chassis that soon emerged was—for those days—basically state-of-the-Pro-5.0-art. This was almost coincidental, however, as Lidio had ordered the car built to NHRA Super Stock specifications, both because he had always had a personal soft spot for that class of race car, and because he

"I would first like to thank Jason Grace," Lidio [pictured] says. "If it wasn't for him, none of this would have been possible. I know I don't say it enough: Thank you, Jason. I would also like to thank Todd Reiter for all of his efforts to get the car race-ready."





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With its Halloween color combo, the ultra-sanitary interior could be quite at home in a show car. Who else but Lidio would have an Alpine CD player in their race car? Where's the subwoofer, Lidio?

knew it would have some saleable value should he decide to peddle it. The project continued to progress. From there it went to be sandblasted and then on to the paint shop,

Doesn't look like nine seconds, does it? Following a formula he has successfully used in the past, Lidio's DOHC 4.6 is internally bone-stock save for Eagle H-beam rods and Diamond Racing stock-replacement 9.85:1 forged pistons. The heads still rock to the tune of stock cams and aren't even Tumbleports, though Lidio did mildly port them. With FAST engine management, no mass air is needed, so plumbing of the 24-psi T-Trim Vortech is clean and uncomplicated.

from which it emerged in all its Sunkist glory in late 1996. Lidio put some wheels under it and trucked it off to Willy's Workshop in Port Huron for a complete interior, then brought it back to Alternative and fitted lights, glass, wiring, and everything else but a drivetrain. And that's when it all came to an unceremonious halt—the complete rolling chassis went into dust-collecting hibernation mode while Lidio attended to other priorities.

It wasn't until fall of 2000 that Lidio finally decided what he would do with the stunningly bright but powerless roller. In the meantime, he had





With a big-tire, four-link chassis built by MPR Racing, Lidio's better-late-than-never orange car positively screams "pro class" but will do its racing in the modular wars. Think of it as a straight-tracking testbed whose job is to try and wring eight-second passes out of factory Cobra cams.

actually accepted a deposit to sell the chassis, but that deal fell through. Likely influenced by the fun and success he had with the blown, modular-powered Fox coupe he had built together with Turbo Joe Spiteri ("High-Speed Half-Breed," Dec. 2000, p. 78), Lidio finally decided he would install a Vortech-supercharged, near-stock Four-Valve modular, overseen by his beloved Speed-Pro (now FAST) engine-management system, and backed by an electronic 4R70W automatic.

Let's be clear—Lidio does not want this to be mistaken for a modular Pro 5.0 car. Now that it finally houses a drivetrain, he will campaign the tangerine

dream in the NMRA and Fun Ford modular classes to try and recoup some of its substantial cost, but its more important role will be as a sort of modular R&D car for Alternative Auto Performance. Lidio's immediate goal is to get the brand-new seven-year-old down into the 8s with the production-style 4R70W tranny and stock-cam Four-Valve. As we write this, it has already gone 9.44 at 144 mph, and that's with a malfunctioning transbrake, a wildly steep 5.43:1 final drive that over-revs the motor through the traps, and no aftercooler. With a little more track-test time and Lidio's tuning skills with the FAST system, this orange should really peel. **5.0**



Inside the shrapnel-wrapped 4R70W is a Precision Industries Stallion torque converter, with 5,000-rpm stall. Headers are from Performance Fabrication & Engineering and are vocally restrained by Flowmaster collector mufflers.



The MPR Racing four-link rear suspension locates a shortened 9-inch stuffed with Mark Williams axles, a spool, and 5.34:1 gears turning huge 15x33 M/T ET Drag slicks. The coilovers are Konis, and the disc brakes are from Lamb.

5.0 TECH SPECS

ENGINE AND DRIVETRAIN

Block	Stock 4.6L Cobra
Displacement	281 ci
Cylinder Heads	Stock (ported by Alternative Auto)
Intake	Stock
Power Adder	Vortech T-Trim
Camshafts	Stock
Injectors	ACCEL 83 lb/hr
Fuel System	Weldon 2025 pump (with -12 and -10 lines)
Throttle Body	Ford Racing Performance Parts oval
Headers	Performance Fabrication & Engineering
Mufflers	Flowmaster collector
Transmission	4R70W (wide-ratio AODE)
Rearend	Four-link with shortened 9-in

ELECTRONICS

Engine Management	FAST
Ignition	MSD DIS-4

CHASSIS AND SUSPENSION

Springs	Koni coilover, front and rear
K-member	Stock, modified and lightened by MPR Racing
Brakes	Lamb discs, front and rear
Weight with Driver	2,950 lbs