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# THE American

★★★ TRI-FIVE

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THE DANCHUK

Tri-Five Nationals  
PREVIEW INSIDE



# A FAMILY AFFAIR

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Owners: The Friends  
American Tri-Five Association Member #947

Dick Freund has always been a car guy. He helped spark a fire in his 10 year-old son Mike by taking him to the Street Rod Nationals in St. Paul, Minnesota. "I was just kind of hooked on cars. I saw cars I really liked and wondered how they worked and what they were about." That spark was fanned into a flame when Dick purchased a '40 Chevy Coupe that Mike started helping his father tear apart in the family garage. Mid-Project Dick's friend brought over a '55 Chevy that was for sale. Dick bought it, and for the next 3 years Mike and his father worked on that '55. And that was that. At 13 years old, Mike was hooked. Like his father, he too became a car guy.

When Mike was younger, he had a '67 Chevelle that he built and used as his daily driver. He drove it everywhere, rain or shine.

At a car show, a gentleman from Milwaukee had seen the Chevelle and asked Mike if he'd consider building him a car. At





the time Mike didn't have the facilities to do that level of work so he ended up renting a building. The car got built. Dick and Mike were on to something.

In 1988 Dick started Classics Plus LTD in an unassuming shop that borders a set of railroad tracks on the outskirts of town. Dick, now partially retired, leaves the day to day operations of the shop to Mike who has ascended to creating some of the baddest Tri-Five recreations out there. And just as Mike worked side by side with his father for years, Mike and his son Nick now work together. 3 generations of car guys turning out some of the coolest hot rods you'll find.

Classics Plus works on all kinds of cars but they specialize in Tri-Fives. Dick still has his first '55 that started this labor of love all those years ago. Mike has rebuilt more Tri-Fives than he can remember. Mike said "I just really love the Tri-Fives and I've done a lot of them. I think you could take a two-door '55 sedan... I think you could take that car all apart, disassemble everything, and I personally think I could take that car and put that car back together blind folded. I've gotten to know those parts so good, I know them by feel, I'm not kidding".

Classics Plus has no problem turning out the ultra-modern, pro-touring cars of today, but what really caught our eyes were the drop dead gorgeous retro gassers. Over the top show stoppers, with enough metal flake to blind the sun itself. What else would you expect from a shop with such an old school feel?

Mike has never wanted much in the way of outside help. "It's always been my dad, myself and my son," Mike said. "We've got a great relationship, all three of us, and everything just works." Dick will still come out to the shop to help now and then if the shop gets really busy. The bottom line with Mike is that he's a perfectionist. The reason he keeps it all in the family is mainly quality control. Mike says "There is a lot of stuff you can hide on a car and there are a lot of dishonest people out there and that's not my style, so I keep it small." A bigger, fancier facility would just mean more time sucking distractions, and that means less time spent building cars. Personal image and company visibility just aren't in his makeup. The quality of the work that comes out of Classics Plus won't change whether they are in a million dollar complex or a shack in the woods. Mike pays his bills doing what he loves and keeps the quality of his builds exceedingly high, and with his son Nick in house, Classics Plus could continue to do the same for decades to come.



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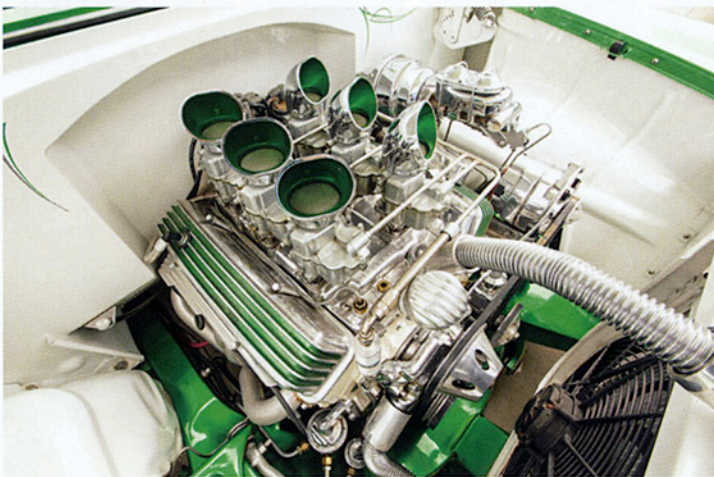


Dick has owned this '55 Sedan since 1980. It's currently on its 3rd incarnation. Something that makes this version special is that Dick's grandson Nick was able to get in on the build so the involvement spans three generations of the Freund family. The '55 sports the grille teeth of a '57 Corvette, custom trim on the quarter panels and a louvered hood. The Paint is Solar Gold by House of Kolor with a draping of flames done in candy tangerine. The heart of Dick's '55 is a built 355 small block which breathes through a Cadillac air cleaner. You'll also find a 4 barrel carb atop an Edelbrock intake. Waste gases are expelled through side pipes exiting just under and behind the shaved doors. Power is transferred to the original '55 rear-end through a TH350 tranny. Dick used 2 inch drop spindles and springs up front and reversed eye springs and 3" blocks to bring down the rear to give this car an aggressive stance. Chromed out steelies from Wheel Vintiques are wrapped in Coker wide whitewall radials.

United Auto Trim stepped in to cover the factory seats in white vinyl that features 2" pleats. Bright orange window moldings, dash and carpet helps the interior stand out as much as the exterior. An Ididit steering column is mated to a color matching '59 impala steering wheel. Dick's car is as unique as the shop that builds these beauties.







**M**ike built this '55 with the help of his son Nick. A three-year project, the car has won several awards at shows across the country. Under the hood you'll find a 283 small block overbored to a 302 with a MSD ignition, an Offenhauser 6 pack and Stromberg 97 carbs. The rumble is provided by a set of dual glass packs. The transmission of choice is a Turbo 350. The front suspension is the same as the day it rolled off the line but the rear has been lowered 3 inches thanks to reverse eye leaf springs and lowering blocks. The inside is nice and tidy with an original gauge cluster, white tuck-n-roll vinyl, white trim, a white steering wheel,


white weather stripping and white carpet that stretches from the toe boards to the tail pan.

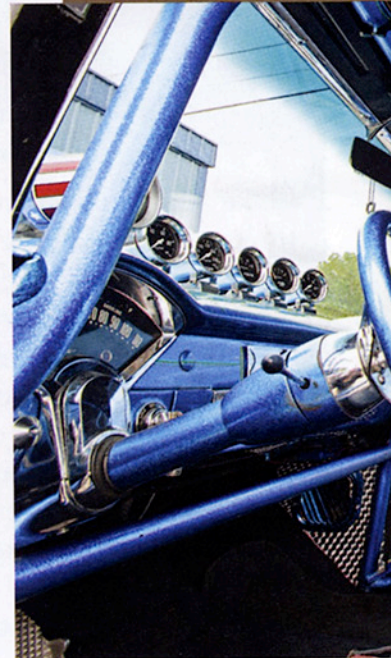
Outside the car you'll find the handy work of Nick Freund, who shaved the body and expertly louvered the hood. A custom bar grille adorns the front. The paint is candy apple green mixed with pearl. Custom silver scallops extend down the length of the car while ghost scallops and metal flake grace the roof.

The whole package rolls on chrome dressed reverse steelies from Wheel Vintiques that ride on Coker wide whitewalls.



Nick is 7 years into his ever changing work in progress. "Something changes on it every year" Nick said. It's currently on its 3rd paint scheme. Nick's Sinister power plant was built by Patterson Race Engines. A 650hp, 496 with 10:1 compression, it gets Nick to the track and down the strip on pump gas. That pump gas is fed through twin 600 Holley carbs and down an Edelbrock tunnel ram. A transbrake equipped Turbo 400 sends all of those horses stampeding back to a 9 inch rear end.

The car is suspended by leaf springs in the back with the addition of traction bars. The Speedway straight axle up front has been widened by 3 inches and is bookended by a set of 15x4.5 Cragar SSs. The rear has a set of vintage 15x10 Ansen Sprints. All four corners sport Pro Track, Street/Strip bias ply tires. No tow vehicle here. This car is driven to the track and back home again. Another reliably built hot rod from Classics Plus. 







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