

**Cover/Photo Contest Winner: Bobby Chester, SECFCA**

**I love Falcons!**



I'm sure many of you can relate. Well the seeds to this "obsession" were planted years ago, so before I tell you about my Falcons, let me begin with a little history.

Growing up, it seemed we always had a Falcon, and without intention, they were always black. In one of the earliest photos of myself, I'm standing in the front seat of a black 61 with my Grandma beside me. Through the years, Dad owned a 1960 four door and several 61s and 62s.

The one I remember most was a 1962 Futura. It was the early model, not the Sport Futura that was added mid-year. I couldn't have been more than 10 or 11 years old, but my memory of the day we bought it is as fresh as the air in

January. It had belonged to an old man who had passed away, so, true to Falcon form, it was the stereotypical "Grandpa Car". It had been parked in a wooded area and left to waste away. I remember my Daddy describing it to me and telling me that it was black with red interior. He was so excited as he told me about it. "It's even got bucket seats!" he said. Remember, I was a kid so all I could picture was this old car in the woods with two 5 gallon buckets in place of seats. Why he was so excited about that?





My dad struck the deal...\$125...and it was ours! We drove my dad's 56 F-100 to get it. Hooked a logging chain to it and pulled it out of the woods. With the same chain securely in place, we proceeded to pull it home behind the truck. Of course this towing method sounds primitive and was dangerous, but it was the mid 70s, and here in the country it seemed perfectly logical at the time. As we towed it home, I

remember thinking..."I will NEVER ride in that thing!" It turned out to be the favorite car of my youth and the one that created the most lasting memories. Too many to tell here.

Now, fast forward about 8 years. It's 1984, I'm 17 years old and browsing through the local car trader when I find an ad for a 1965 Falcon. It was a mint condition, dark blue 1965 Futura hardtop. It was an automatic and a V8, which was a must for this teenager. Completely original, down to the hubcaps, it had been purchased new for the owner for her 16<sup>th</sup> birthday. Her husband, a mechanic for the local Ford dealer, had always pampered the car, even keeping it garaged on the days he drove it to work. I'm not sure why they chose to sell it, but the wife could not watch it leave. I kept the car for about 3 years before selling it to a kid who promptly totaled it out. It was a great car and one that I regret selling to this day.



Now it's 1991, and after being without a Falcon for a while, I started to long for another one. It's the "obsession", remember? I put the word out and pretty soon a friend found a 63 ½ Sprint, so we went to look at the car. It had been sitting for about 16 years and man, did it look rough. After seeing it, I was afraid it was more than I wanted to undertake, so I decided to pass on it.



The following week, I went to look at another Falcon that I had found in a local paper. It was advertised as a 63  $\frac{1}{2}$  Sprint, but it turned out to be a Futura with Sprint emblems simply added to the front fenders. After looking at this car, I started to reconsider the Sprint I had looked at the week before. Yeah it needed a lot of work, but it was solid, all there, and it was most definitely a Sprint. Heck, even the original Sprint tach still rested atop the cracked padded dash.

So...I called my friend up, we made a trip back and purchased the car. This gentleman was the original owner and I even got the original title for the car.



Purchased new from the showroom floor at a dealer in Chatsworth, GA., the car had been used for just about EVERYTHING. There was even a trailer hitch welded to the back bumper. The owner said that the car had been used to haul moonshine all over North Georgia. This was evidenced by the stack of leaf springs used to stiffen the car up when loaded for a run. Whew...the condition of the car was definitely a far cry from my previous Falcon!

Although making the car just a driver was my original intention, a complete restoration was soon underway. Again, I know many of you can relate. We took the car all apart. The rubber was replaced and every piece of trim was either polished, rechromed or replaced. All the glass was good, except for the windshield, so only the windshield was replaced. When sanding the car, we made an interesting discovery. We found a hole where a bullet had entered the car on the rear quarter panel. I asked the owner about the hole, he just laughed and said, "I told you I used that car to haul moonshine!" If only this car could talk!

The original 260 had been replaced by a 1965 model 289. Thankfully, the original chrome dress up kit, including the air cleaner cover, had been retained and used on the 289. Yes it all needed to be rechromed, but I wanted to keep the original look, so it was all sent to the chrome shop. The engine was bored, the heads were shaved and flat top pistons and a mild cam were added. Along with that, I obtained an original 1963 FOMOCO 4 barrel intake and mounted an Edelbrock 4 barrel atop it. The 2 speed transmission was replaced with a 3-spd auto from a Galaxie.



When it came time to paint the car, which was originally Corinthian White with a blue interior, the decision was made to paint it Raven Black. Although I've second guessed that decision countless times over the years, I guess it was only fitting considering that ALL the round bodied Falcons we had in my youth were black. Keeping things simple, I went with a stock black interior as well.

A few years later, I added air to the car. The unit came from a 64 Fairlane. It's not correct for a 63.5, but it is a FOMOCO unit and I think it adds to the interior. The Sprint currently sits on BF Goodrich tires with a set of vintage 14x6 American Racing Torque Thrusts that I had polished. Other than the wheels and dual exhaust, it pretty much retains a completely stock appearance.

It's been 17 years since the restoration, and the car is really just a driver now. It's been driven to two Falcon Nationals, one Regional meet and it's longest trip was over 900 miles accompanying some of my SECFCA friends to the All Ford Show at Silver Springs, Florida. The whole family has made trips to local car shows and cruise-ins. But sometimes the best ride is just to town for ice cream at the local Dairy Queen. This car is something that my whole family enjoys. My son Noah, and my daughter Anlee, love to ride in the "Hot Rod", as they call it. We have a great time with it and it's priceless knowing that my children will grow up with fond memories of a black Falcon, just like I did!

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