



Earl Pamperin credits skills he learned in high school shop class and the Navy for providing the knowledge to restore an FC-150 Jeep.

Restored FC-150 Willys Is In Pristine Condition

By Lorn Manthey, Contributing Editor

In the world of auto racing, there are stock cars, formula cars, and dragsters, but it's hard to find a funny car. In farm country, there are Silverados, Rams, and F-150s, but it's hard to find an FC-150. At Earl Pamperin's place in Juneau, Wis., both funny and FC-150 can be found embodied in one vehicle – a fully restored 1957 Jeep FC-150.

Whatever adjective one might use to describe Pamperin's blue ribbon masterpiece, some call it cute, unique, or interesting (Pamperin calls it beautiful ugly), no one can deny it's a head-turner.

The vehicle was built by the Willys company, which began in 1908 and rose to fame and admiration because of the iconic WWII Jeep. After the Korean War, the

company struggled to find new footing. One of its products, built to gain a foothold in the 4x4 market, was the forward cab FC-150. The cab sat over the engine, allowing for a shorter profile while still providing a 78-in. box with better than half-ton hauling capacity.

In 1957, less than 6,000 were made. Pamperin has one of the few survivors. "I credit my school shop classes for a good introduction to wood, metals, and welding," Pamperin says. "I added more knowledge and skills at a technical college and working on military airframes while serving in the Navy."

After the Navy, he completed an apprenticeship while working at a precision sheet metal company. At that point, he had the skills needed to beat auto panels into submission. Pamperin's interest in restoration started with the barn discovery of a 1937 Willys sedan. After 8 years of hard work, he had a museum-quality car. He then found a '39 Ford Cab Over needing his expertise. That one only took 10 years, but it got him ready for the FC-150 challenge, which combined his interest in Jeeps and cab overs.

After a long search, Pamperin located an FC-150 in Montana and hauled it back to Wisconsin. The Jeep was rusty, had parts missing, and was battered from an accident. It didn't need TLC. It needed tough love, and over the next seven years, Pamperin brought it back, doing most of the work himself. "I'm not a renovation purist," says Pamperin. "I restore based on what

I like and what makes sense."

He says the original interior was utilitarian and boring. Inspired by a previous owner, Pamperin found a jazzy and colorful plaid interior, which adds to the quirkiness of the Jeep and brings smiles to those who see it.

Pamperin says the FC-150 never caught on with the public. It had some attributes like the ability to climb most hills, and with its solid axles, the ability to detect even the smallest defect on a road. Hitting a bump at 40 mph could rearrange kidneys. The vehicle faded away after a few years, so only a lucky few ever see one. Fewer still see one as good as this one.

What's next for Pamperin? Well, there's no rust growing on his rocker panel. He's already found his next restoration in boxes of parts, which one day will become a 1952 Willys M38A1 Military Jeep. It won't be funny or a cab over, but it will be amazing. Stay tuned.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Earl Pamperin, Juneau, Wis.



Pamperin restored the interior with a jazzy and colorful plaid finish.

Superspeed Super M Tractor Still Running Four Decades Later

By Lydia Noyes, Contributing Editor

Keith Peterson of Moorland, Iowa, installed a 302 engine and C-4 transmission from a 1974 Ford Maverick into his father's International "Super M" tractor. He wanted to make the older tractor move faster for spraying and when traveling from field to field. When Peterson spoke with us about the project in 1986 (Vol. 10, No. 1), he reported that the modified tractor had a top speed of 50 mph.

In addition to the new engine and transmission, he modified the tractor by lengthening the frame two feet and moving the hood and seat forward. He replaced the tractor's narrow front end with a wide front he fashioned from the back axle of a Case 1660 combine. He also equipped the machine with a tilting and telescoping steering wheel. At the time, Peterson took on the remodel as an FFA project and earned a blue ribbon at the Iowa State Fair in the category of large farm project.

Almost 4 decades later, weather and time had taken its toll on the tractor. "The paint was badly faded, and rain had locked the engine up; the number 8 cylinder was badly rusted and stuck," says Chuck Peterson, Keith's brother. "I decided to bring this tractor back from the dead for Dad, who turned 87 in February."

Restoring the Super M for a second time became a family project. Says Chuck, "I tried to soak the rust with penetrating oil but couldn't get the piston to move. Keith and I decided to try to cool the piston down using liquid propane (LP gas), turning a grill tank upside down, and dribbling the liquid into the number 8 spark plug hole. My estimation is the extremely cold propane (around -44 F) shrank the piston at least 50/1000 of an inch, allowing me to turn the engine over enough to clean up the rusty cylinder after I removed the head."

Keith told FARM SHOW in 1986 that he still needed to modify the brakes, as they weren't designed to stop a fast-moving

machine, meaning that he had to use the engine to slow down the tractor. "No real progress has been made there," reports Chuck today. "The top speed I've been brave enough to reach is 40 mph (according to my GPS on my phone), although 50 mph is possible."

Despite its quirks, Chuck knows his father approves of the restoration work on what was originally his tractor. "Once I got it running, he gave it to me."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Chuck Peterson (gamble711@hotmail.com).



Peterson used lp gas to cool and shrink the piston enough to turn the engine over and free the rusty cylinder.



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