

DETROIT'S RIDLER WINNER

STREET RODDER



THE WORLD'S STREET RODDING AUTHORITY

FULL-BODY MASSAGE

TOOLS & TECHNIQUES

CUT & BUFF

VIRTUAL SPRAY BOOTH

TECH

MULTIPLE CARBS

ALUMINUM SMALL-BLOCK

OLD SCHOOL

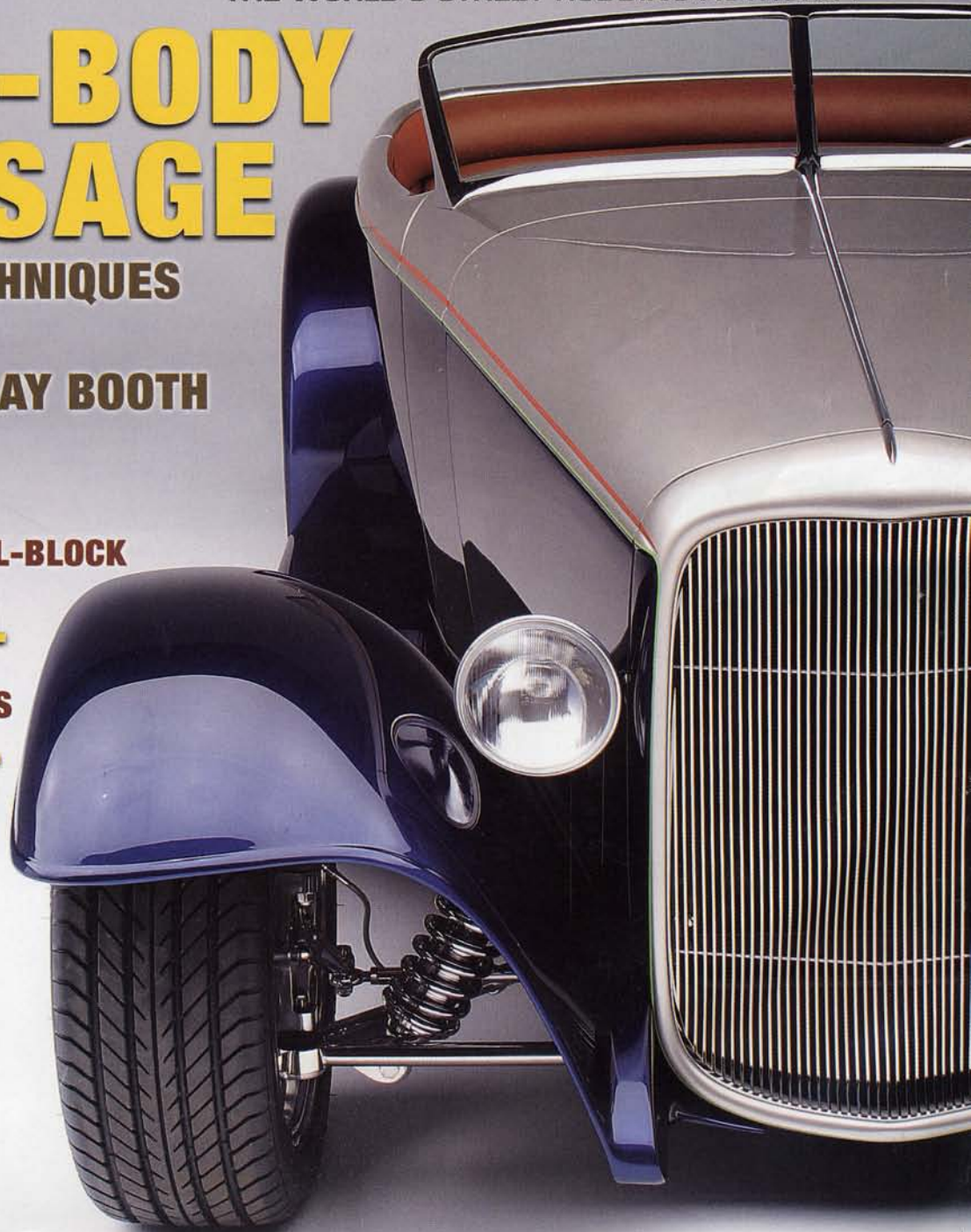
NERF BARS

SHIFTER COLUMNS

TRACK TEST

LEXUS-POWERED

DEUCE



DISPLAY UNTIL 6/14/05

JULY 2005 • VOLUME 34, NO.7
\$4.99 • \$6.99 in Canada



tech

REMOVE IT FOR GOOD!

REMOVING SCRATCHES, HOLOGRAMS, AND COBWEB EFFECT



One of the most misunderstood aspects of our hobby relates to paint care, maintenance, and upkeep. We've probably all been guilty of it at one time or another. While some of our cars rarely even see water—let alone the circumstances I'm about to describe—most all of us can relate to it. Here's the situation: You grab your wash bucket, put some soap in it, fill it up with the hose, and grab a towel and start washing away. By the time you've got one side clean and start working the other, your wash bucket looks more like you're mixing concrete rather than washing your pride and joy. Now, what most people don't realize is that all the sediment that's making your wash bucket that pretty shade of gray ends up back on your wash towel and rubbed—err ... scratched—back into your paint. Then, what you end up with are thousands and thousands of teeny, tiny scratches that, over time, evolve into swirls, holograms, and cobweb effect.

Unfortunately, getting these imperfections out of the paint surface is harder than either putting them in or avoiding them entirely. A clean wash bucket used in conjunction with either a high-end body brush or wash mop, is the first step in the right direction in avoiding those pesky imperfections. Also using a 100 percent natural sheepskin chamois or microfiber drying towel will avoid rubbing any foreign particles into the paint surface once it's washed.

Now, let's get down to business. Your 20-year-old paint job still looks pretty good, but

it's got some road rash and just doesn't have that high luster that you'd like it to have. Aside from having the entire car repainted, there's really only one thing you can do, pay through the nose to have a detail shop buff and polish the finish. But you're a do-it-yourselfer you say? Well then, let's see what it takes to get those imperfections out of the surface and the shine back in. We went to Meguiar's Car Care Products for a little one-on-one with the director of training, Mike Pennington, and got the low-down on how to get your car to really shine. **SR**



The first thing you want to do is to clean the area in question. We used Meguiar's Final Inspection and a high-quality terry cloth to wipe the area down.



With the area washed clean and dried, the inspection process can begin. Adequate lighting is important so that every imperfection can be viewed. Notice how the reflection of the halogen light looks blurry? That's caused by orange peel. The process we will use to remove the scratches and swirls will also knock some of that down.



(left) Which grit sanding paper you start with depends upon the severity of the damage. Our panel has lots of scratches, but nothing very deep, so we started with 2,000 Unigrít Finishing Paper from Meguiar's, backed by their sanding pad. The unique feature of the Unigrít paper is that the particle size is uniform, as is the distribution. This guarantees that every pass removes the same amount of material. (right) Using a clean spray bottle with water and high-lubricity car-wash soap, spray the work area and begin to sand using a light, straight-line sanding technique and check your progress frequently.



When you check your progress, use both your eyes to look for any imperfections and your hands to feel any high/low spots and deep scratches.



Inspecting the edge of the work area, you can see where just one sanding pass flattened out most of the orange peel.



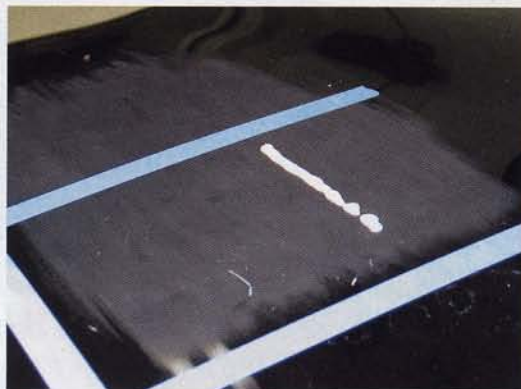
When all the scratches are removed and you're satisfied with the result, wipe and dry the area clean with a terry cloth and give it a final once-over.



Now it's on to Step 2- Removing sanding marks. In this step, we'll be using a rotary machine buffer with either a wool or foam cutting pad to apply the compound. We opted to use the Cut 'N Shine Wool Pad since it's a little more aggressive in removing imperfections than the burgundy colored Soft Buff cutting pad.



Now it's time to choose which compound to use. While the Diamond Cut Compound works a little faster, since we used 2,000 Unigrít paper, the less-abrasive Compound Power Cleaner is the best choice.



We split the sanded area in three to give a better visual with the center section being the work area. Apply a 6- to 8-inch bead of compound and you're ready to begin buffing. Remember to always prime the pad with either a few squirts of Final Inspection spray or a few beads of whatever compound is to be used. Tilting the leading edge up slightly and placing the trailing edge on the work area, moving from right to left, and simultaneously powering up the buffer will keep splatter to a minimum.



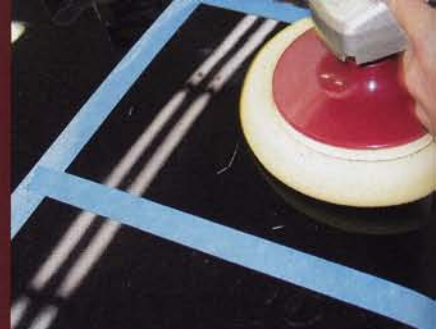
(left) Apply light pressure and move slowly in a back-and-forth motion. Overlap 50 percent each pass and keep the pad completely flat in relation to the work area. (right) Check the bottom side of the buffing pad often, removing excess compound with a metal spur to keep foreign materials from making all your hard work in vain.



Continue buffing until all sanding marks are gone and a light film of compound remains. Wipe clean with a terry cloth and Meguiar's Final Inspection spray and inspect the finish. The scratches should be gone as well as a noticeable difference in the orange peel.



For the last step—polishing—we'll use two pads and two compounds. The W-8000 pad on the left is good for removing minor surface imperfections and is a good match for the Dual Action Cleaner/Polish compound and we'll use that combo first. Then, we'll move on to the W-9000 Finishing Pad used in conjunction with the Swirl Free Polish to seal the deal.



The same technique is used to polish the finish as was used before to buff out the scratches. First, the surface gets polished to perfection, removing any imperfections still present.



Then, the surface gets a swirl-free finish polish to ensure a high-gloss shine.



The finished product speaks for itself. The area on the lower left side is the finish we started with. The upper right is after hand-color sanding with 2,000 Unigrut Finishing Paper. And right in the middle is the color-sanded, buffed, polished, and finish-polished area that really shines. The difference can be seen not only in the lack of scratches throughout that area now, but also in the reflection of the light that seems to completely straighten out when it reaches the finished area.

MEGUIAR'S

17991 Mitchell South, Dept. SRM
Irvine, CA 92615-6015
(800) 347-5700
www.meguiars.com