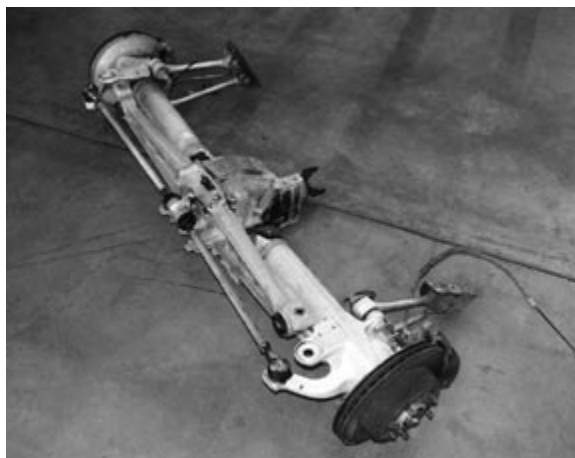


C4... and After Part II Bringing Up The Rear

Last month, we gave you a little insight on a Mustang II alternative, the Flat Out Engineering C4-based IFS (with Alston's VariShocks) going under a '57 Chevy chassis at Ironworks Speed & Kustom in Bakersfield, California. Well, we couldn't leave you standing with just the frontend install, so we made sure we were there, camera and notepad in hand, when Ironworks owner Rodger Lee was ready to equip the same Chevy chassis with a C4-based independent rear suspension. And to be honest, it would be a shame, going to all the work to install a Vette front suspension and just go with a simple leaf-sprung or four-linked rear. No, if you're gonna go big, you might as well go really big and do things right. Follow along as we show you how. (Stay tuned for the third installment of the series, where Rodger Lee outfits the '57 with a tubular center crossmember and Zs the rear frameraills.)

Here's the C4 rear assembly in all its aluminum-ness; the transverse leaf spring was removed as the kit calls for coilovers. The factory locating bars were replaced with Heim joint-equipped rods for smoother suspension actuation with the air bags. Fresh bushings in the stock bars would be sufficient when installing coilovers with this kit.



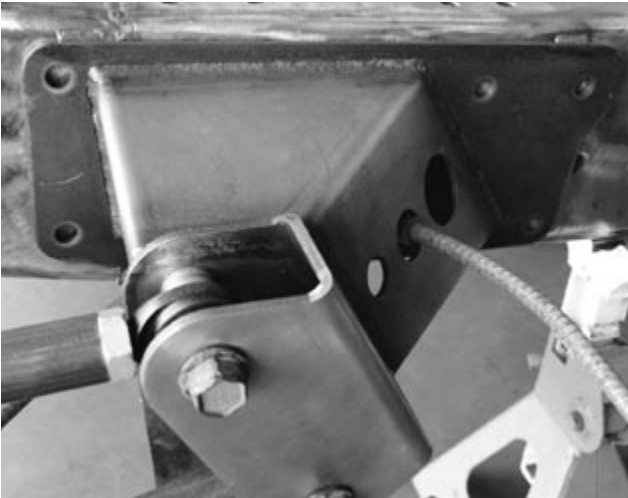
G4... AND AFTER



With the stripped frame set level on jack stands, Rodger Lee assembled the brackets onto the rearend with the provided hardware according to the instructions. Flat Out Engineering's instructions include all measurements for locating the rearend in the frame.



With the rear mounted in the chassis, Lee broke out the VariShocks. Chris Alston has turned air ride upside down with this one. It's an Air Ride Technologies Shock-wave built onto a Chassisworks VariShock Quickset 2 with its adjustable rebound and compression. Sixteen positions on each knob combine for 256 possible control settings. They even work upside down.



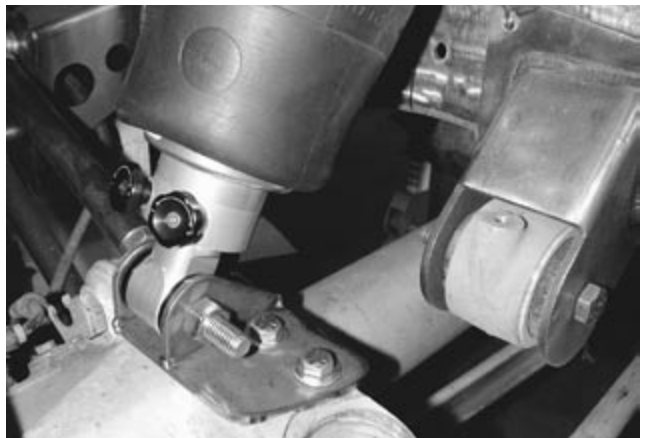
With the rear positioned on a floor jack, the brackets were aligned within the frame and clamped into place. Reference points were remeasured until Lee was sure it was in the right position before tack welding the brackets to the frame.



Here's where Rodger hits a snag. While a coilover fits nicely between the frame rail and locating rods, just ahead of the axle, the diameter of VariShock's airbag makes this mounting position iffy at best.



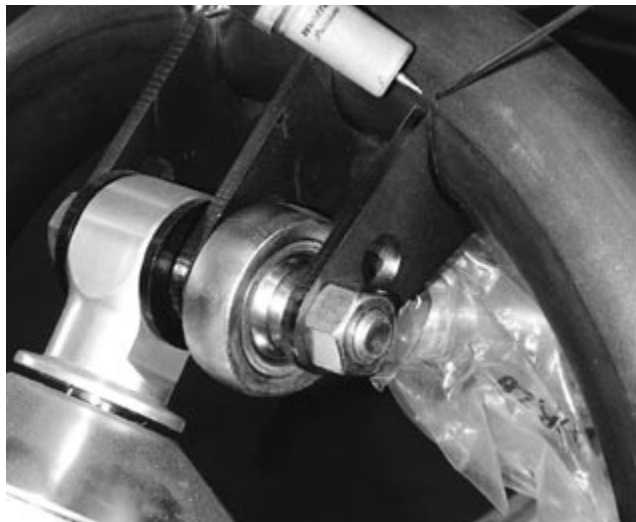
Rodger boxed the entire length of the frame on this particular build so he had to modify the crossmember that mounts the third-member. The kit includes a pair of brackets that span the frame rail, and mounts this crossmember. The brackets were eliminated and the crossmember lengthened and tacked directly to the boxing plate.



Lee chose to mount the VariShocks on top of the hub carrier and let the suspension protrude into the bed area. With the bottom of the shock located a few inches ahead of the former leaf spring mount, Rodger was able to use the sway bar holes to locate a mounting bracket. He fabricated the bracket using some 3/16-inch flat plate for the base with some shock-mount tabs from Victory Circle, a local race shop, tacked on.



An additional piece of plate was added to the side of the bracket to add strength. It picks up the bolt that mounts the upper bar and will be welded to the main bracket after a little more trimming along the top. The brackets were tacked together for mockup and will be TIG welded completely once everything fits.



The upper tabs were stacked three-wide allowing the use of one bolt to mount the VariShock and the stabilizer bar.



While he was at Victory Circle, Rodger picked up a pair of 1.5-inch diameter U-bends to fabricate the upper mounts. With the suspension bottomed out along with the VariShock, the height of the U-bend was determined, measured, marked, cut and tacked into place. The first hoop was not set at any particular angle, it was "eyeballed" and placed at an angle that looked good. The angle was then measured with a protractor and the opposite side was made to match.



Here's the driver's side and its proximity to the bed side. Here it's deflated and as close as it's going to get. Rodger plans to leave this section of the bed open to show off the polished suspension.



The rake looks good with no air in the bags sitting on 245/50-16 tires. Rodger wants it to lay level when it's parked so that the rear of the frame will get 2'ed when the tubular center section is installed. Stay tuned for part three.



While poking around at Victory Circle, Lee found these sweet aluminum stabilizers and decided to use two instead of one going hoop to hoop. With Heim joints mounted to the ends, they were crisscrossed from each hoop to its opposing framerail using more race shop mounting tabs.