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Rick Bottom's 2011 Taurus SHOx

By: Benjamin Hunting Photos: Doug Mitchel Gearhead Girl: Courtney

Completely redesigned for the 2010 model year, the Ford Taurus shed much of its previously dowdy-looking sheet metal and emerged back onto the market in a much more attractive package. Not only did the Taurus look the part, but it also had the power to back it up, thanks to the availability of a twin-turbocharged 3.5-liter V6 engine installed in the SHO high performance editions of the sedan. Matched with a six-speed automatic transmission and all-wheel drive, the Taurus SHO's 365 horsepower are more than enough to motivate the heavy sedan with substantial authority, while still providing the kind of fuel economy that modern families demand out of a four-door car.

When Rick Bottom got his hands on a 2011 Ford Taurus SHO with the intention of modifying it for the 2010 edition of the Specialty Equipment Market Association (SEMA) show in Las Vegas, Nevada, he knew the platform offered him the chance to dial up the sedan's performance up to an entirely new level. Bottom, who is no stranger to the pages of Gearhead News, is currently the Special Projects Coordinator at Modern Muscle, Inc. which is a custom car shop owned by Indianapolis Colts veteran Ryan Diem and Justin Meyers.

In addition to his duties at Modern Muscle, Bottom also serves in an ongoing role as a developer of General Motors and Ford SEMA Project Vehicles, helping each company with a variety of different programs and..... Continued Next Page

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building some of the most exciting vehicles on display at the event each season. Bottom said that the road to getting the Ford Taurus SHO to the brand's SEMA display began early in the year when he selected the vehicle as his platform of choice due to the realms of modern technology stuffed under its skin. It is uncommon to find a domestic car featuring turbochargers, direct fuel injection and all-wheel drive, and he was intrigued by what he saw as a sedan with virtually unlimited potential.

Dubbed the Ford Taurus SHOx, the car that rolled out of Modern Muscle on its way to the SEMA show had definitely benefited from extensive modifications to both its drivetrain and styling. Under the hood, the Taurus now

offered a Hahn Racecraft Stage 1 Performance Package, an Airaid intake system, and Labonte methanol injection. The stock exhaust system was replaced with a set of Corsa cat-back pipes complemented by the installation of No-Weeds exhaust diverters, and the transmission was beefed up thanks to upgrades from Bowler.

Tying everything together was a dyno tune using an SCT Performance programmer, handled by Modern Muscle owner Justin Meyers. The end result was an additional 100 horsepower over stock, bringing the total output of the Taurus SHOx to 465 ponies. Perhaps even more impressive is the fact that the car still gets fuel economy of close to 27 miles per gallon on the highway, despite offering blistering acceleration and an eye-popping top speed.



In order to keep all of the Taurus SHOx's prodigious output under control, Bottom and Modern Muscle also installed a number of additional upgrades, including two-inch H&R lowering springs and a set of Baer Claw Extreme brakes (15-inch front and 14-inch rotors with nickel-plated calipers) to help haul the Ford down from triple-digit speeds with authority. 22-inch Pirelli PZero Nero ultra performance summer tires were wrapped around



forged five-spoke Axiom wheels from the Rick Bottom Design Series, further enhancing the SHOx's grip and looks. These Rick Bottom customs are the first in the industry to feature a step-lip 22-inch wheel.

Rick also designed the body kit that adorns the Taurus SHO's exterior, which is built by Razzi/AAC and which is now available for purchase by SHO owners across the country. The vehicle's aggressive air inlet hood and motorcycle style gas cap were sourced from Cory Stuart's Stuart Industries, and the entire car was sprayed with Planet Color (Sherwin Williams) Azzurro California Metallic blue paint, a color most often seen on the Ferrari California. The exterior was finished off through the installation of leopard silver RaceMesh custom grille inserts, custom Light Wurks headlights and blue tints installed by Epic Garage in Batavia, Illinois.

The passenger compartment of the Ford Taurus SHOx is as unique as the exterior, thanks to its 2+2 seating arrangements and the installation of a custom rear center console by Gary Duraw from Gary's Upholstery which can actually accommodate interchangeable

able art work and pictures directly into the unit itself. As would be expected from a show car, the SEMA SHOx also comes with a booming multi-thousand watt sound system that features CD, DVD and iPod inputs as well as an Eclipse navigation head unit, a rear LCD screen and MTX speakers and amps, all installed by Epic Garage's Greg Kosobudski.

Not only does Rick Bottom's 2011 Ford Taurus SHOx look great and go like stink, but it was also one of the stars of the 2010 SEMA show. The Taurus SHOx earned recognition on three of the most prominent "Best of SEMA" lists, including those put together by noted publications Road & Track and Car and Driver.

What's next for Rick? Currently, he is busy with his latest project, a 1971 Chevelle convertible restomod intended for Indianapolis Colts player Charley Johnson that will feature an LS3 drivetrain sourced from a 2010 Chevrolet Camaro, along with a host of other performance goodies. Given Bottom's attention to detail, there is no doubt that this upcoming automobile will look and drive as great as his 2011 Ford Taurus SHOx.

Check out www.modern-muscle.com for more info.



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