

WHO'S WHO?

Like beautiful snowflakes, each of the cars that competed in the Kumho Tires Grassroots Motorsports \$2007 Challenge presented by eBay Motors and CDOC was unique. Also like snowflakes, there was the ever-present potential for catastrophic meltdown.

After all, our army of reader-fabricators has been known to exceed the manufacturer's suggested specifications from time to time. Heck, these cars don't even remember what it was like to be under warranty. Still, the majority of Challengers found a way to extract that last ounce of speed on a budget without finding disaster.

If it competed at the Challenge, you'll find it listed here. Since the drag racing was rained out, the only two scored categories were the autocross (🏁) and concours (🏆). They're listed along with each car's vital info in the order they placed at the event.

Official \$2007 Challenge Spotters Guide

guide by scott r. lear and chris stutters
photos by mark langello and david s. wallens

STILL SKEPTICAL?
See their complete expense documentation online at:
grassrootsmotorsports.com/challenge



AUTOCROSS 1ST PLACE • CONCOURS 1ST PLACE • GARRET JENKINS MEMORIAL BEST ENGINEERED

Finishing position: 1st place

Car: No.661986ChevroletCorvette

Entrants: SoyandakasonDebutPaGeorge, MatGardatoBrianHavensPatFoley, KerryJohnsonToddLensenWaynesie, SusMalakoutiPapsobriDanTaylor.

Builder: Dodge Motorsports

Hometown: West Chester, Ohio

Purchase price: \$1400

Budget spent: \$1920.70

🏁: 33.208 sec.

🏆: 94.5 pts.

Like a B2 Spirit stealth bomber, this large group of Procter & Gamble engineers from Ohio appeared out of nowhere and completely blew away the competition. Their ordinance was the Cheaparral, one of the

most technologically complex automotive contraptions we've ever seen on any budget, never mind a paltry two grand.

The team had many potential cars in mind when an Auto Trader ad for a \$2000 rolled-over C4 Corvette appeared. They negotiated the price down to \$1400 and went to work. A pair of small T25 turbochargers (\$70.81) gave the already potent Chevy V8 about 5 psi of boost, improving power with a reasonable margin of safety.

The Cheaparral's secret weapon was its vacuum downforce system based on the mechanics of its legendary namesake, the Chapparral 2J. A used snowmobile engine (\$182.50) provided the drive for a surplus exhaust blower sourced from an M1 Abrams tank (\$26.50). The fan created a large cavity of negative pressure between the underside of the car and the ground, which in turn generated nearly 1000 pounds of downforce



at any speed with a weight penalty of just 200 pounds.

Autocross ace Danny Popp took the Cheaparral to FTD on its first run—a good thing, since a sticking throttle made subsequent runs dodgy. The car's ingenuity and creative engineering wowed judges and fellow competitors alike.