

RAMBLER REBEL 1970



A Journey Through Time: The Quest for a 1970 Rambler Rebel SST

For Lindsay McKenzie, the pursuit of owning a 1970 Rambler Rebel SST Coupe was not just a whim but a decades-long odyssey. The Rebel SST, revered among American muscle car enthusiasts, is celebrated for its unique blend of style, performance, and rarity. With its 304 V8 engine, the Rebel offers a potent mix of

power and character, encapsulated in a design that stands out even among its contemporaries. Its right-hand drive configuration, a special feature for this particular model built in Kenosha, USA, adds a layer of exclusivity, making it a prized possession in the classic car community.

RAMBLER REBEL 2-DOOR COUPÉ

McKenzie's story begins in 1983, under the dim lights of a Friday night in Timaru, where a dark blue Rebel SST with a 'For Sale' sign caught his eye. The car, with its vinyl roof and black interior, was in surprisingly tidy condition for its age. However, the absence of contact details meant McKenzie had to return later, only to find the car had vanished by Sunday. What followed was years of inquiries and searches, all in vain, until the car seemed more like a ghost than a tangible goal.

The trail picked up again in 1997 when whispers of a similar blue Rebel SST coming to Oamaru sparked hope. However, this car had been repainted a lighter blue with a matching



interior, leading McKenzie to believe it was a different car. It wasn't until after he acquired the vehicle that he learned it was indeed the same car from Timaru, its interior once black, then stripped back to blue by subsequent owners.

The car's journey had been tumultuous. Saved from a wrecker's yard in Christchurch in 1982 by Alvan Jones, it bore the scars of a badly crushed trunk lid, which Jones ingeniously repaired by adapting a sedan's lid. After some cosmetic upgrades, including a fresh coat of paint and a vinyl roof, the car was briefly on sale when McKenzie first encountered it.

The 1980s were not kind to the Rebel; it endured rough handling and substandard repairs, diminishing its once-proud appearance. Yet, its inherent allure as a piece of automotive history persisted.





The narrative took a fortuitous turn in June 2016 at a garage sale in Weston, where McKenzie, initially there for a V8 engine, stumbled upon his long-lost treasure. Now, the owner, overwhelmed by the prospect of restoration, was ready to let go of the Rebel. This was the moment McKenzie had waited for, 33 years of searching culminating in the acquisition of a car steeped in personal history and automotive legend.

Under McKenzie's stewardship, the Rebel SST has been restored to a condition that not only revives its original splendour but also celebrates the spirit of muscle car enthusiasts who value rarity, performance, and the stories these cars carry. The 1970 Rambler Rebel SST, in his hands, has transcended from a mere vehicle to a testament of perseverance, passion, and the enduring appeal of classic American muscle cars.

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