

INSIDE INTENSE RACING'S
9-SECOND TURBO GRAND PRIX

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Lightning

INTENSE Racing's Scott Cook holds the 3800 FWD record at 9.649 seconds

The innocuous looking, plain white '98 Grand Prix of INTENSE Racing's Scott Cook certainly doesn't look stock—big slicks protruding past the front fenders is an obvious giveaway—but it doesn't exactly look like a 9-second terror, either. For the record (at least as this issue went to press), Cook's best ET in the car is 9.649 at 146 mph.

Think about that for a minute: 9.64 seconds at nearly 150 mph in a portly, stock-bodied, V-6-powered front-driver. It doesn't matter what your opinion of front-driver drag racing is, that's flat-out fast! A video of the record-breaking run can be viewed at www.3800pro.com/forum/showthread.php?t=5316. Currently, Cook and his Grand Prix are in the thick of a battle for 3800 performance superiority. At this writing, Cook's got the edge as the fastest and quickest. His skirmish victories include:

- First 3800 V-6-powered front driver to exceed 120 mph, 125 mph, 130 mph and 135 mph.
- First 3800 V-6-powered front driver to eclipse the 11.50-, 11.00- and 10.50-second ET barriers.

Having the quickest 3800 car in the land is certainly a reason to be proud, but Cook's Grand Prix also serves as 9-second proof point for his business, INTENSE Racing (www.INTENSE-racing.com), which has been at the forefront of Grand Prix performance. Amazingly, the car's rise from well-worn used car to record breaker was pretty quick; the car's only in its fourth season of competition.

"The first-ever pass with it netted a 12.04," recalls Cook. "On the fifth pass, we got an 11.63 at almost 120 mph, which set the all-time 3800 FWD quarter-mile record."

That memorable day happened in 2003, on the car's first track outing. Since then, the lightning-quick Grand Prix has continued to raise the bar by lowering the ET mark. Not too bad for a project that started with a 114,000-mile used car and an incalculable amount of sweat equity.

Of course, the key to the car's quarter-mile success is the pressurized V-6 engine. But while stock GTPs featured Roots-blown power adders, Cook's car relies on the infinitely adjustable performance of a turbocharger. The engine is comprised of one of INTENSE's own 8:1-compression racing short blocks, which features strong "L32" connecting rods, forged pistons, a polished crankshaft, enhanced oiling, ARP main studs, and an align-honed block.

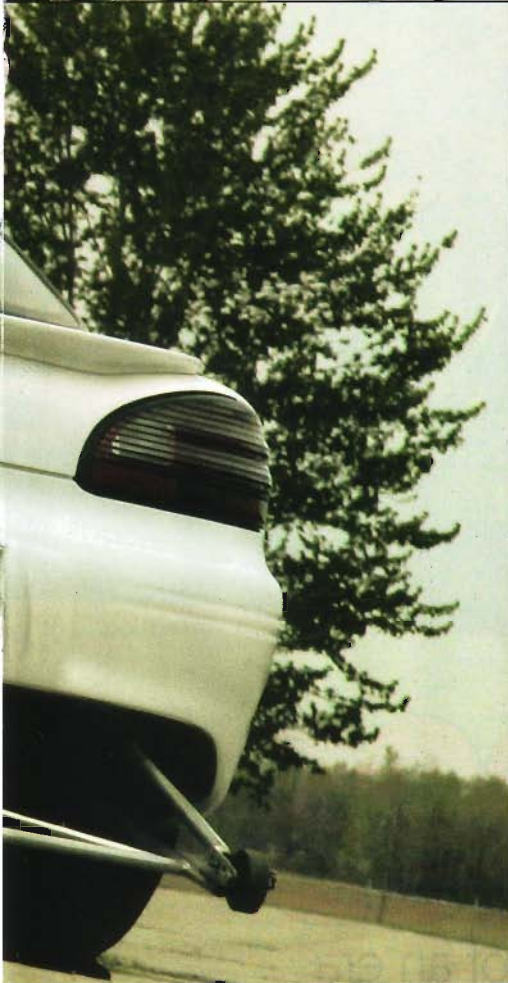
The heads are, again, INTENSE's own products. They're Stage 4 heads, which have 61cc combustion chambers, 1.90-inch and 1.57-inch stainless valves and a full CNC porting job. Stiff, 180-pound Comp double springs are used, along with Manley titanium retainers. Airflow

FAR LEFT: A purposeful cabin includes a racing seat, custom controls, aftermarket gauges, and a floor-mounted B&M shifter.

CENTER: The trunk is gutted, save for a fuel cell and fuel pump system.

LEFT: The B&M racing shifter is a common sight in rear-drive cars, but is used by Cook to control the beefed-up GM transaxle.





is impressive, at 235 cfm on the intake ports and 222 cfm on the exhaust side (both at 0.600-inch lift). The engine also uses INTENSE's 3/8-inch pushrods, Comp Cams lifters, Harland Sharp 1.60-ratio roller rocker arms and a Rollmaster double-row timing chain.

Another INTENSE Racing component is the "turbo" camshaft, the grind of which is designed for the operating parameters seen in drag racing with a forced-induction application. Beyond the block and heads, the engine uses a modified L67 intake manifold, with a custom Wilson Manifolds plenum. It's capped by a modified LS1 throttle body, which draws all the forced air of the Precision Turbo PT76GTQ compressor. A custom intercooling systems helps keep down the intake charge temperature.

A large-capacity fuel system is required to match the quantity of air crammed into the engine—at upwards of 28 psi. Siemens 60-lb/hr injectors are nestled in custom PRJ fuel logs and are fed by a Weldon 2015 fuel pump. An INTENSE custom PCM keeps the engine running, measuring air via a stock LT1 mass air meter.

Exhaust is handled by custom headers from B&R Racing. Finally, an oversize, W-body radiator is used, along with a Meziere electric water pump. A close look at the engine reveals Pontiac-blue paint on the block and heads.

"I've always been a Pontiac guy," says Cook. "We offer the Pontiac blue color on the engines we build."

The roughly 800-horsepower engine is channeled through an INTENSE-modified transaxle and third-generation limited-slip differential—with a 2.93 final drive ratio. The transaxle features a GM Racing 1,200-horsepower racing input shaft and 800-horsepower sprocket/drive chain set.

The transmission is controlled by a floor-mounted B&M shifter, which is not the type of component usually seen in a front-drive car. Cook's car is a purpose-built racer, though, and the cabin is designed for function. As the air

conditioning system was jettisoned long ago, a custom control panel resides in the former place of the heater controls. It contains various switches and a timing control knob. There also is a line of gauges on the A-pillar, racing driver's seat and an NHRA/IHRA-legal roll cage. The air bag-equipped steering wheel also was ditched. The trunk is all-business, too, containing a custom fuel cell, fuel pump and not much else.

B&R Racing was responsible for welding together the roll cage, as well as building the strong, 4130-steel front control arms and tie rod ends. The fabrication shop also was responsible for the custom coil-over rear suspension, trailing arms, solid motor mount and the wide wheelie bars. To help keep the car's mass to a minimum, the car's glass was replaced with polycarbonate pieces from Percy's Speedglass, while a featherweight carbon-fiber hood was installed. Also, an aluminum engine cradle from a Monte Carlo was used.

And because this race car needs grip at the front, the big-and-little tire combination uses drag skinnies out back and a set of 28-inch-tall by 10.5-inch-wide slicks up front. It's a combination that runs the ragged edge of grip vs. broken parts.

"We've gotten 1.50-second 60-foot times out of it and know it could go deep into the 1.4s, but the input shaft just doesn't hold up," says Cook. "It's the challenge we have with such a powerful front-driver; we have to leave it a little soft to save the parts."

Nevertheless, the INTENSE Racing Grand Prix has been the quarter-mile king of 3800 cars and will continue to be the flagship of Cook's expanding business.

"We started in 2001 and have grown steadily ever since," he says. "There are a lot of enthusiasts for GM's front-drive performance cars and we're going to grow with them."

Anyone needing an affirmation of Cook's capability needs only to watch the video of that historic 9.649-second run. It's, well, "INTENSE." ■

TOP CENTER: Wilson Manifolds modified a standard GM lower intake manifold with a custom, sheetmetal plenum.

TOP RIGHT: A huge Precision Turbo-supplied compressor helps pump up to 28 psi through the V-6 engine.

BOTTOM RIGHT: Scott Cook began racing the Grand Prix in 2003, when it ran 11.63 on its first outing. He's currently the quickest 3800 FWD pilot out there, with a 9.649-second time slip to prove it.